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ABSTRACT

This document has four major objectives: (1) to synthesize and summarize the relevant literature on the employment of paraprofessionals; (2) to present the insights and impressions gained from experiences in a limited field investigation; (3) to relate both the literature and the field investigation to a conceptual framework; and (4) to discuss the knowledge gained from the literature and the field experiences for its operational implications for managers and decision makers in the social welfare and rehabilitation services. A framework was used to organize the literature into five major sections--antecedents of the paraprofessional movement, a description of paraprofessional workers, their utilization, their assimilation into organizations, the consequences of employing them--and to develop concepts for constructing instruments for collecting data in the field. (Author/PC)

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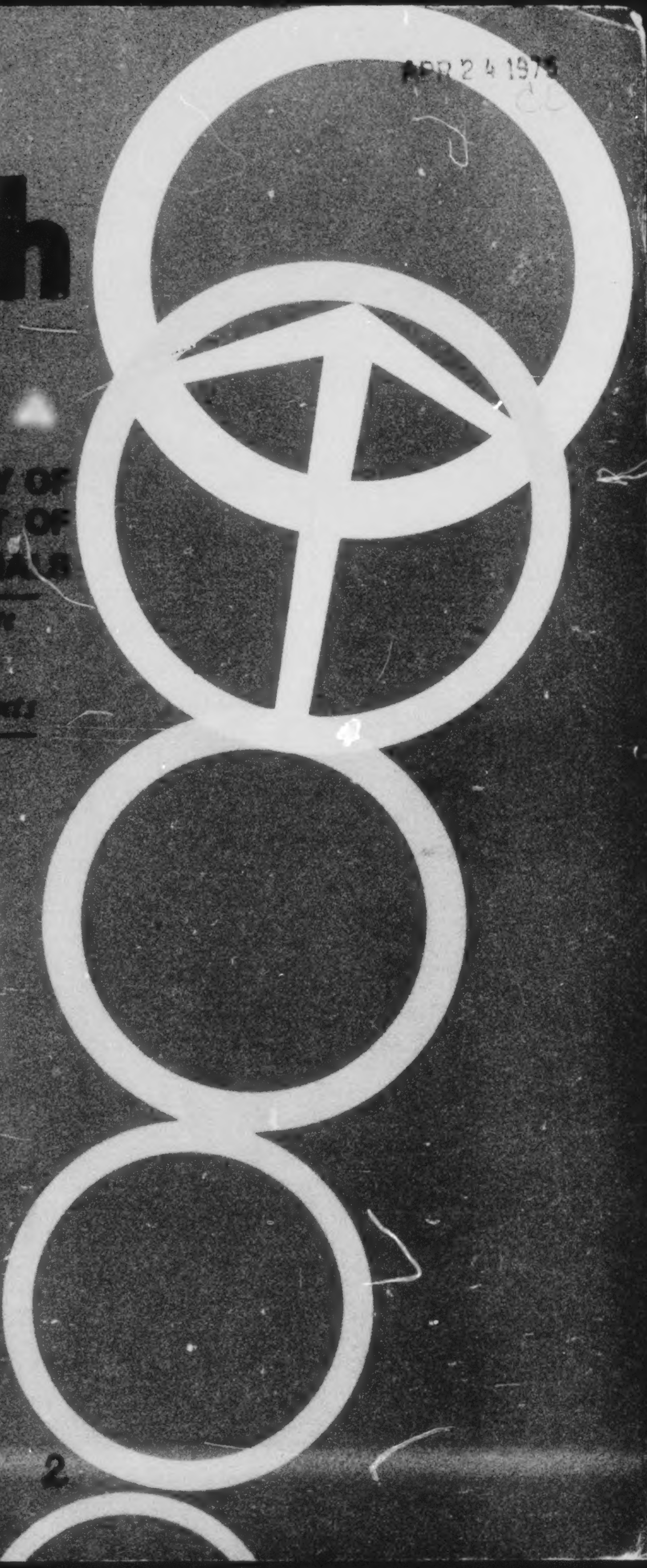

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and Rehabilitation Workers,
Work, and Organizational Contexts

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
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FOREWORD

This volume is the tenth publication resulting from a seven-year program of research on social welfare and rehabilitation workers, the work they do, and the setting in which that work is performed: the National Study of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Workers, Work, and Organizational Contexts. A summary of the research program appears in the Appendix of this report. The new knowledge generated by this integrated program of research is expected to be of use to policy makers, administrators, service delivery workers, and other personnel of public and private agencies and to teachers and students in the field. It is available to these users through a series of publications of three different types: working papers, research reports, and program application reports.

This volume is based on a report of the initial, overview phase of the study of employment of paraprofessionals, staff and organizational adaptation, and implications for service delivery by Dr. Robert J. Teare, Dr. Robert D. Gatewood, Mr. Hubert S. Feild, and Mr. Thomas D. Williams of the University of Georgia. The tentative findings reported here are the result of a review of research and theoretical writings and of a limited field investigation conducted during this study.

The overriding purpose of this publication, of the series, and of the research itself, is utility. Usefulness will be increased by comments and suggestions by potential users of the research and from colleagues in other settings. Such comments and suggestions are invited.

Gary A. Massel

Gary A. Massel, Ph.D.
Associate Administrator for
Planning, Research, and Evaluation
Social and Rehabilitation Service

Washington, D.C.
May 1974

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

SUMMARY

This document has four major objectives: to synthesize and summarize the relevant literature on the employment of paraprofessionals; to present the insights and impressions gained from experiences in a limited field investigation; to relate both the literature and the field investigation to a conceptual framework; and to discuss the knowledge gained from the literature and the field experiences for its operational implications for managers and decision makers in the social welfare and rehabilitation services.

The conceptual framework developed for this study describes the interaction between the organization and the paraprofessional worker in terms of antecedent variables (motives of each), situational variables (expectations of each and patterns of assimilation and utilization), and consequent variables (effects on the organization, the workers, and the client). This framework has been used to organize the literature into five major sections—antecedents of the paraprofessional movement, a description of paraprofessional workers, their utilization, their assimilation into organizations, the consequences of employing them—and to develop concepts for constructing instruments for collecting data in the field.

Major emphasis has been placed on literature dealing with the paraprofessional in the social welfare and rehabilitation services. Literature from other areas (e.g., education, mental health, medicine, law enforcement) has generally been excluded. Source documents have been treated as references rather than as bibliographic materials, and the presentation is made in summary form rather than as a review with detailed citations.

Published and unpublished literature on the paraprofessional worker has grown phenomenally in recent years.[1] *This document addresses itself to that expanding body of literature with the four major objectives stated earlier. To the*

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[1] It is difficult to choose an appropriate label to designate the growing number of workers in the delivery of social welfare and rehabilitation services who do not have the qualifications traditionally required for entry into the field. Many labels have been used in different contexts by different writers and their meanings have changed over time. No one term appears to be acceptable either to the workers themselves or to researchers in the field. The term "paraprofessional" has been selected for use in the document because it has fewer negative connotations of status or utilization than other terms. For these same reasons, however, it is not particularly helpful in communicating meaning and needs to be defined more carefully. As subsequent chapters show, workers so designated play many roles and carry out a wide range of tasks. The various meanings of the term as they appear in the literature will be discussed.

extent that it accomplishes these objectives it should prove useful to a wide readership. Its immediate value will be to researchers and academicians, its ultimate value to those who plan, manage, and evaluate the ever-changing SWRS programs in this country.

The activities described were carried out by the Department of Management of the University of Georgia under contract with the Social Welfare Manpower Research Branch of the Social and Rehabilitation Service. The project, entitled "An Overview Study of Employment of Paraprofessionals, Staff and Organizational Adaptation, and Implications for Service Delivery," culminated in this report.

The four major questions to which this research was directed are:

- *For what reasons and by what processes do paraprofessional workers become employed in SWRS agencies?*
- *What kinds of workers are they?*
- *How are they being utilized?*
- *What are the consequences of their employment?*

In planning this research, it seemed that an underlying theoretical framework was necessary to: suggest relevant concepts for study; provide a rationale for organizing these concepts into variables; and depict ways in which these variables might be related to one another. Such a framework was developed and presented in the original proposal for this project (Teare, 1971, pp. 201-216). It will be discussed here in some detail.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1 presents a paradigm of the framework. It depicts the flow of variables presumed to shape the ways in which workers are used in organizations. These patterns of utilization are then assumed to result in a range of consequences for clients, the workers themselves, and the organizations that employ them.

The paradigm reflects the assumption that worker utilization within an organization is the result of a continuing series of implicit or explicit transactions between the worker and the organization. The motives and expectations of these two parties may be the same or they may differ. The extent to which they converge depends both upon the forces that shape the transactions and upon their consequences.[2]

In relation to the initial criteria, the conceptual framework has been of considerable use. It identifies various content elements as foci for examining and synthesizing the literature. It suggests various areas for field investigation, data collection, and measurement. It relates the content elements to one another and thus begins to offer an array of hypotheses to be tested.

Content Elements

The four research questions listed earlier suggested five major content classifications for the conceptual framework: types of paraprofessional workers; forces operating on agencies to employ them; patterns of assimilating them into organizations; patterns of utilizing them; and the consequences of employment on the workers themselves, the organizations that employ them, and the clients. Each of these classifications, with several subelements, is described below.

Types of Paraprofessional Workers. It is useful to discuss paraprofessional workers in terms of their life history and demographic data. These include such variables as: age; sex; race and cultural background; years and type of education; place of residence; length of residence; marital status; number of dependents; voluntary association memberships; occupational background; history as a client; and other relevant antecedent life experiences.

Forces Operating on Agencies. The paradigm (boxes A and C) suggests that diverse forces may operate on social service and rehabilitation agencies to utilize paraprofessional workers. Among these forces are: pressures to alleviate manpower shortages; pressures to lower personnel costs; demands to increase and

---

[2] This framework assumes that the principal elements of transaction may lie both within and outside the organization. The client and the community may be both active and passive agents in the process. Thus, the framework can accommodate a variety of models of service. In the past, most organizations were patterned on medical or social care models. In recent years, models of institutional change and political power exchange have been offered as alternatives (Marris and Rein, 1969). In these newer models, agents outside the organization (e.g., clients, consumers, legislative bodies) are seen as having a more active role in shaping organizational transactions, including those involving the utilization of workers. At present, much of this thinking is speculative and the models are poorly formulated and inadequately tested (Buckley, 1967). However, these concepts have implications for worker utilization strategies and for future modifications in the conceptual framework. They will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

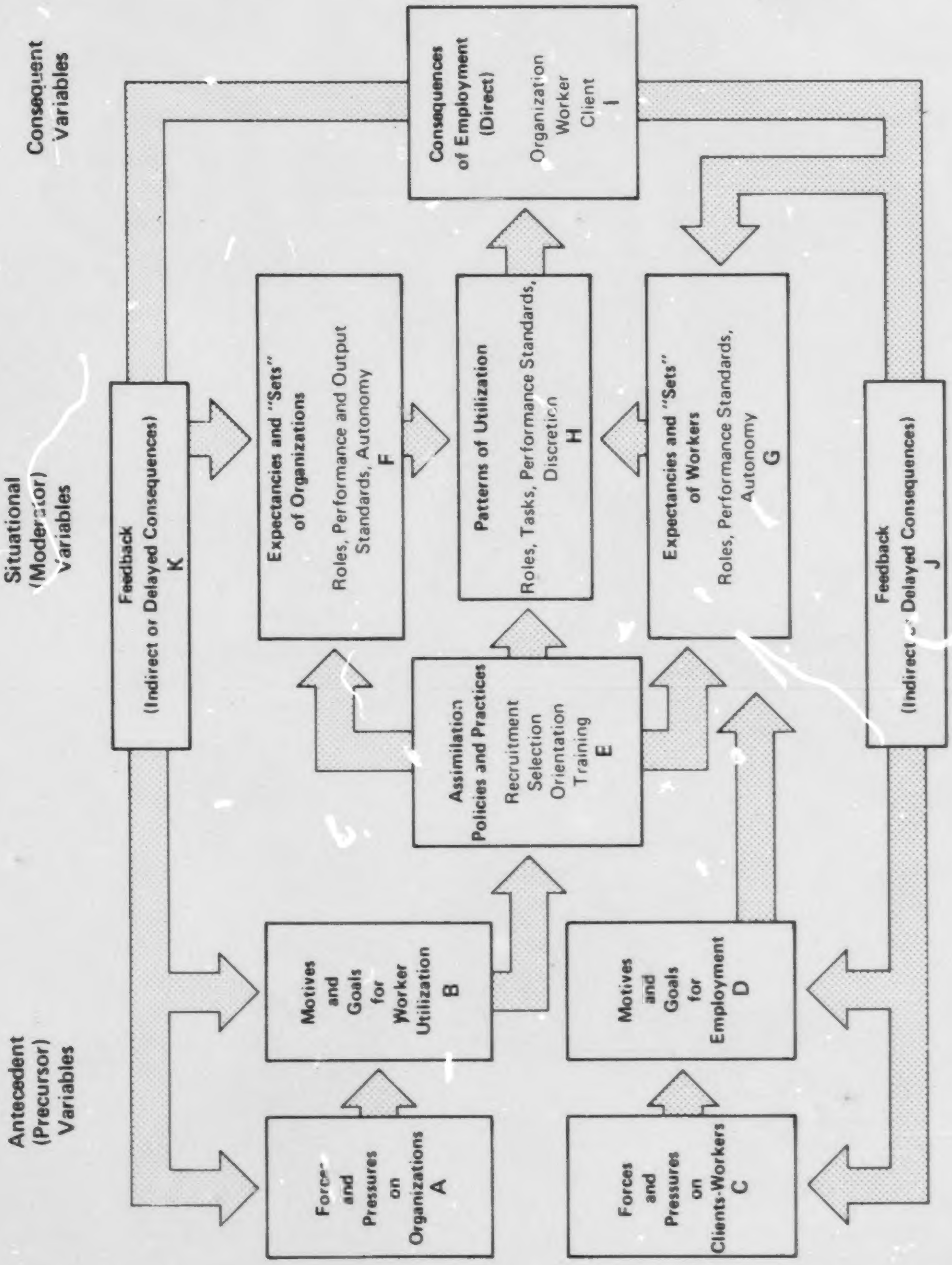
Antecedent (Precursor) Variables
Situational (Moderator) Variables
Consequent Variables
Forces and Pressures on Organizations A
Motives and Goals for Worker Utilization B
Forces and Pressures on Clients-Workers C
Motives and Goals for Employment D
Assimilation Policies and Practices
Recruitment Selection Orientation Training E
Expectancies and "Sets" of Organizations
Roles, Performance and Output Standards, Autonomy F
Patterns of Utilization
Roles, Tasks, Performance Standards, Discretion H
Expectancies and "Sets" of Workers
Roles, Performance Standards, Autonomy G
Consequences of Employment (Direct)
Organization Worker Client I
Feedback (Indirect or Delayed Consequences) K
Feedback (Indirect or Delayed Consequences) J

Figure 1. Paradigm of the Conceptual Framework

improve services; requirements imposed by mandate, charter, or legislation (e.g., 1967 Social Security Amendments, OEO legislation, Model Cities program, HUD's Social Goals program); pressures created by socio-economic and cultural differences between service workers and clients; and pressures from local groups (church councils, newspapers, etc.)

To determine how much these forces influence the employment of paraprofessionals, other variables must be considered–organization size; source, magnitude and type of funding; scope of services; degree of centralization in decision making; formalization of policies and procedures; staff composition; and extent of reliance on formal position descriptions and a precise division of labor. These variables will reveal how vulnerable an agency is to pressures for change.[3]

Patterns of Assimilation. The process by which paraprofessionals are introduced and absorbed into an organization (box E) is affected by: the degree of preparation that has taken place (e.g., modification of career ladders, sensitization of supervisory personnel, design of procedures for mobility); recruitment techniques; specificity of selection criteria; status of entry jobs in the organizational hierarchy; methods of orienting new workers; and scope of in-service training.

Patterns of Utilization. The variables in this content area (box H) relate to dimensions of worker activity, such as: role expectancies or job objectives; tasks and task clusters; distribution of time and effort among various tasks; types and levels of discretion associated with tasks; and diversity of activities (specialization versus generalization). Related variables could include: sources of information and instruction; specificity of performance standards, both process and impact;[4] and type and extent of supervision.

Consequences of Employment. This content area (box I) is concerned with the outcome of the interaction among variables in the first four content areas, and can be viewed from the perspective of the organization, the workers, and the clients. For the organization, the consequences of employing paraprofessionals would include changes in: structure; scope and types of services and programs; procedures and criteria for recruitment and selection; content of training programs; supervisory practices; performance standards; descriptions of activities; and degree of emphasis on formalized programs. For the workers, the consequences would include changes in: job expectations; career aspirations; levels of job satisfaction; patterns of work activity, both self-initiated and externally imposed; and life style off the job. For the clients, the consequences would include changes in: time spent with workers; time spent waiting for service; types of services received; perception of the continuity and suitability of services.[5]

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[3] Several of these variables have been used by organizational theorists to plot the change potential of organizations along a continuum from "mechanistic" to "organic." See particularly Bennis et al., 1961, and Burns and Stalker, 1962.

[4] We are expanding on a distinction made by Kadushin, 1965. Process standards are those imposed on what the worker does (e.g., interaction with a client), impact standards on what gets done (e.g., results of intervention, movement of clients in specified directions).

[5] "Status of functioning" and "domains of living" as useful criteria for evaluating service results have been discussed in an earlier publication, Teare and McPheeters, 1970.

Data Relationships

One criterion for the conceptual framework was that it should describe the variables in such a way that relationships among them could be examined. The arrows in the paradigm are intended to reflect both temporal and associative relationships. Each element is assumed to have been influenced by those that precede it and to influence those that follow it. Accordingly, content areas and the elements within them have been categorized as a chain of antecedent, situational, and consequent variables.[6]

The paradigm represents what is probably a dynamic rather than a static process. The content elements could be assumed to represent variables, the measure of which should demonstrate an interrelationship.

Under ideal experimental conditions, this would permit hypotheses about cause-and-effect relationships[7] and the introduction of the notion of feedback. The consequent variables are not merely the products of prior events; they also modify them and, in doing so, create a new chain of events.

The paradigm also depicts the evolving process of utilization as an open system. While recognizing the employment of the paraprofessional as an internal matter, it suggests that modifications of manpower strategies can and do come about as a result of forces external to the organization. It is this open system concept that permits one to move beyond the 'social care' model.

Use of the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework has served to depict the dynamics of the employment of paraprofessionals in public and private SWRS organizations. It has also served two additional purposes: the organization of the literature, and the identification of areas for empirical study.

Organization of the Literature. The literature has been organized in five major topics: antecedents of the paraprofessional movement; the paraprofessional worker; utilization of the paraprofessional; assimilation of the paraprofessional; and consequences of employing the paraprofessional. Each of these topics is described in the section on the organization of this report at the end of the chapter.

Identification of Areas for Empirical Study. These five topics have indicated areas for the empirical study of various aspects of paraprofessional employment. From topic definitions a series of data collection instruments have been designed for use in the field investigations of the project. The Personal History Inventory (PHI) records biographical data that will expand and clarify worker typologies.

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[6] This categorization reflects the belief that a more appropriate model for depicting the utilization of paraprofessionals may require an extension of the traditional model of personnel selection and placement. The paradigm resembles the 'moderator' concept proposed by Dunnette, 1963.

[7] These relationships were clearly implied by our earlier depiction of utilization as the end result of a process of continuous transaction.

The Worker Orientation Survey (WOS) and the Inventory of Professional Perceptions (IPP) are self-report questionnaires intended to uncover the attitudes and values of both paraprofessional and professional workers with respect to job expectations, work satisfaction, role and role conflict, agency climate, and interpersonal relationships. The Job Analysis Survey (JAS) is a task analysis schedule to describe the kinds of tasks paraprofessional workers are assigned, the degree of discretion they are permitted, and the types of people with whom they come into contact in the discharge of their duties.

Additional interview schedules have been devised for information about the movement of paraprofessionals within their organizations (e.g., method of introduction to the job, type of training and orientation, degree of mobility, reactions and adaptations of worker and organization to one another).

The use of these instruments and the preliminary findings they generated are described in Chapters 7 and 8. Since data were collected on only a small number of respondents, these findings are necessarily impressionistic.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LITERATURE

Literature on the paraprofessional worker covers a number of fields of activity–dentistry, education, occupational and physical therapy, law enforcement and corrections, medicine, nursing, psychiatry, psychology, recreation, social work, and vocational rehabilitation. This review is confined to literature in the social welfare and rehabilitation field,[8] with an occasional reference to literature in other areas (e.g., education, mental health) to illustrate a point or provide a context.

Manner of Presentation

Source documents have been treated as references rather than as bibliographic materials because the literature is extensive and repetitious. To have presented a miscellany of essays, position papers, policy statements, and conference reports as a review with detailed citations would have resulted in a disjointed narrative. Instead, an attempt has been made to summarize and synthesize the source documents used. Those specifically cited are considered representative of several written by the same author or authors, or present the views of different writers on the same subject.

For the reader who wishes to have more detail, a list of sources is provided in the bibliography. Also included are sources that do not deal specifically with the paraprofessional but were found relevant. The list is not exhaustive. We have concentrated on material produced between 1962 and 1971, since it was during this period that the bulk of writing on paraprofessionalism was done.

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[8] The demarcation of these service areas is difficult but is an important part of the SRS National Study research strategy. We have concentrated on literature dealing with paraprofessionals in public welfare agencies, voluntary social service agencies, neighborhood service centers, community action agencies, rehabilitation centers, Veterans Administration hospitals, and sheltered workshops.

As can be expected in a rapidly expanding field, the reference materials come from widely scattered sources and are fragmentary in coverage and unequal in quality. Some are anthologies or textbooks, others are articles that have appeared in professional journals. A great many are unpublished pieces—part of a growing 'fugitive' literature.[9] The narrative draws on all these sources. But the reader who wishes to follow up on them should be prepared to encounter difficulties. In many instances references within the documents are inaccurate, articles are out of print, sponsoring organizations no longer exist, and purchase costs are high.[10]

This report is primarily an exposition, not a critical review, of the literature. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the material consists largely of position papers and debate on policy issues; there is relatively little reference to empirical research. One should therefore expect a great deal of repetition, disagreement among authors, and widely disparate claims.

Principal Retrieval Sources

Abstracting series in related disciplines were searched. These included: *Poverty and Human Resources Abstracts* (PHRA), published by the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Michigan; *Abstracts for Social Workers*, published by the National Association of Social Workers; the *KWIC* (Key Work in Context) Index of Relevant Journal Articles, published by the School of Social Work, Syracuse University; the *Sociological Abstracts*, published by the American Sociological Association; and *Rehabilitation Literature*, published by the National Easter Seal Society for Crippled Children and Adults.

In addition, more than 500 letters were written to individuals and organizations in an attempt to identify and retrieve fugitive materials. The most fruitful contacts among these were: the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations and the Institute of Social Research, University of Michigan; the New Careers Development Center, New York University; the Manpower Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.; the University Research Corporation, Washington, D.C.; and the Social Development Corporation, Washington, D.C.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The first section of this report (Chapters 2 to 6) presents a narrative review of the literature. It is organized to: highlight major elements of the conceptual framework; identify concepts that are of interest to researchers; and identify issues and policies of importance to decision makers.

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[9] The term fugitive describes articles, reports, and monographs found in the media not usually screened by the abstracting services. It also describes items, prepared under proprietary restrictions, with a more limited distribution than the published literature and more difficult to trace.

[10] In presenting these references materials no longer available have been omitted.

The second section (Chapters 7 and 8) presents the results of a limited field investigation of paraprofessionals working in selected social service settings. This investigation, designed to clarify many points in the literature and explore others not covered by it, was shaped by the literature and the conceptual framework.[11]

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[11] Since the field investigation is based on responses from a limited number of paraprofessionals, its findings and recommendations must be regarded as impressionistic. The statistical treatment of data has been excluded. The main purpose of this section is to present a readable qualitative interpretation of the field research, supported by quantitative terms when needed and available.

CHAPTER 2

ANTECEDENTS OF THE PARAPROFESSIONAL MOVEMENT

SUMMARY

To understand the often contradictory statements in the literature on the paraprofessional, one must realize that the forces which shaped this movement were not unified but disparate and frequently antagonistic. Tracing its antecedents is a complicated process. A review of the forces which shaped it, however, is helpful in explaining the heated rhetoric and the contradictions that an examination of the literature reveals. Although the employment of paraprofessionals can be traced to the 1930's, it was not until the 1960's that their widespread use began. Of major importance in developing this impetus were: the shift in the U.S. from a goods-producing to a service-producing economy; the view that manpower was a vital national resource; and the realization that class, not mass, unemployment was becoming a significant problem.

The New Careers concept, stressing the value of people who reside in poverty communities as manpower resources for poverty programs and agencies, gained increasing prominence. The movement suggested that these "indigenous paraprofessionals" served as a bridge between the community and the agency. The culture and problems they shared with their clients uniquely qualified them to establish such communication.

The changing emphasis in pertinent legislation reflects the complex issues involved in employing paraprofessionals. The Manpower Development and Training Act, 1962, authorized programs to train workers facing displacement due to technological change. The Economic Opportunity Act, 1964, emphasized the participation of recipients of services and target communities in the planning and implementation of service programs. The Scheuer Amendments to EOA, 1966, sought to stimulate entry-level job opportunities, provide for advancement, encourage continuous employment, and finance supportive and educational services for newly-entering workers. The Harris Amendments to the Social Security Act, 1967, required state public welfare agencies to plan for the training and employment of paraprofessionals, with emphasis on hiring welfare recipients. The 1968 Amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation act were designed to stimulate the use of New Career paraprofessionals in the rehabilitation services and to create employment opportunities for the handicapped clients of the VR agencies.

Motives for the utilization of paraprofessionals are the product of varied

political, social, and economic forces. The five most commonly discussed are the desire to:

- *alleviate the manpower shortage in the SWRS field;*
- *provide employment for the hard-core unemployed;*
- *improve the efficiency of SWRS delivery;*
- *increase the effectiveness of SWRS delivery;*
- *provide a therapeutic work experience for workers with problems.*

Different motives have different implications for the selection, training, assignment, and evaluation of these workers. When the basis for employing them is constantly shifting, it is difficult for hiring agencies to formulate unified utilization strategies. The issues go beyond the technological and conceptual questions associated with manpower utilization. While many writers, including Meyer (1969), Reiff (1969), and Riessman (1965a), see the utilization of paraprofessionals as part of a larger movement for social reform, others such as Grosser, et. al. (1969) do not:

> *The New Careers movement, as this phenomenon has been designated, has, in our view, inflated a useful and relevant, albeit limited, strategy to the grandiose status of a social movement. (p. 6)*

As Gartner (1971) has pointed out, however, few topics associated with the human services have received as much attention. The volume of writing on paraprofessionals during the last decade suggests that what is at stake is more than a limited strategy for manpower utilization.

A number of summary conclusions can be drawn from the literature. The use of paraprofessionals in SWRS settings is a phenomenon of the 1960's. The pressures for their use have come from various sectors of society and the economy. Motives behind the use of paraprofessionals are political, economic, and social. These motives and forces themselves change in their direction and intensity. Resources for implementation (funds, legislation, projects, and organizations) historically have been quite diffuse and loosely organized. Precise definition has been impeded by lack of standardized terminology to describe types of workers and patterns of use.

These characteristics will be discussed in detail in this and subsequent chapters.

ORIGINS OF THE MOVEMENT

The concerted use of the paraprofessional worker in the human services can truly be called a phenomenon of the 1960's.[12] The heightened social awareness, unrest, and turbulence of that decade have left an indelible stamp on the strategies developed for the use of this manpower.

In the twenty-year period following the end of World War II, a manpower revolution was created by a shift in the economy from the production of goods to the production of services (Levine, L., 1968; Yarmolinsky, 1968). This shift had two pronounced consequences: workers in vulnerable production jobs were displaced faster than new jobs in the service sector could be created and workers trained to fill them; and this displacement caused a severe discontinuity between the skills available in the labor force and the skills required for new kinds of work.

The obsolescence of skills was only part of the picture. These technological and economic developments were taking place at a time when the value and meaning of work and the mission of the social services were being questioned. When the forces leading to the employment of paraprofessionals are separated from one another, it becomes easier to understand why there has been so little agreement on their use. Some writers have viewed the employment of paraprofessionals as an end in itself; others have seen it merely as a beginning—the first step toward job security and advancement.

The assignment of historical beginnings is always arbitrary and risks oversimplification. Various writers (Greenberg, 1967; Kobrin, 1959) have traced the use of paraprofessionals in the human services back to the 1930's. The use of personnel without full professional training as volunteers has an even longer history. The use of paid paraprofessional workers to give service to clients is more recent, however, dating from the period 1957-1962.

As Levine (1968) pointed out, several political and economic events during this period, including the launching of Sputnik in 1957, the recession of 1957-1958, the 1960 presidential campaign, and the 1960-1961 recession, heightened the awareness among policy makers of the following trends and values:

- by 1957 the United States had shifted from a goods-producing to a services-producing economy;
- manpower should be viewed as a national resource to be developed and protected;
- class unemployment (among groups characterized by age, sex, race, education level, or geographic location) rather than mass unemployment was becoming a problem of increasing magnitude.

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[12] As it is used here, the term "human services" covers a wide range. It includes those professions listed in Chapter 1 and parallels the domains of living described in Teare and McPheeters (1970). The social welfare and rehabilitation services (SWRS) can thus be viewed as a subdivision of this broad services spectrum.

These trends and values, stated as they are above, rarely attract the attention of the general public or stimulate political and social action. It takes an arresting description of human suffering to do this. Michael Harrington's book *The Other America* was such a work. It appeared in 1962 and was destined to become an important influence in American political thought. Harrington brought to life statistical and sociological descriptions of poverty in America. He gave concrete human meaning to economic abstractions.

His principal contention was that the prevailing concepts of poverty, specifically Galbraith's (1958) notions of "case poverty" and "insular poverty," were inadequate.[13] As Harrington saw it, poverty resulted from the loss or absence of viability in the occupational market place, and did not occur on an isolated case basis or limit itself to regional pockets. He described the post-World War II technological revolution, and highlighted the fact that it had brought about basic structural changes in the division of labor and, most importantly, in the access to work opportunities. As a consequence, major segments of the labor force, regardless of location, were being consistently cut off from the occupational mainstream.[14]

Harrington, in large part, described inequalities in the world of work and the manpower policies associated with them. He succeeded in dramatizing these inequalities and opened the way for new manpower policies. Many of his ideas became premises in the philosophies supporting the use of the paraprofessional worker.[15]

Harrington's description of persistent economic vulnerability as class unemployment is closely related to the concept of structural poverty. Structural poverty is brought about mainly by forces outside the control of people affected by it. To the extent that this is true it will persist despite the efforts of these people to remove themselves from its influence. This lengthened time "at risk" has several consequences. First of all, it increases the likelihood that other problems will arise, connected with housing, education, physical health, mental health, mobility, and safety, and serving to create what has come to be called a cycle of poverty.[16] Secondly, the exacerbation of problems faced by such people can have dramatic impact on those closely associated with them (e.g., family members).[17] Finally, bearing the burden of failure for long periods of time can cause people to develop ". . . attitudes and patterns of conduct that seem to be an accommodation to their circumstances" (Kriesberg, 1970, p. 2).

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[13] "Case poverty" refers to persons with an individual disability that excludes them from advancement in society. These isolated cases, unrelated to one another, implied little in the way of systemic causation. In "insular poverty", systemic causes were assumed. Persons were affected, not on an individual basis, but because they happened to live in areas, or "islands", where the economic structures had broken down.

[14] Harrington estimated that 40 to 50 million people, the "other Americans", were so affected. One may quarrel with his numbers but his description of the phenomenon and documentation of its existence are quite impressive.

[15] It should be pointed out here that the reconstruction of historical connections in the thinking of authors is a tenuous business. When attribution is given, through citations, there is no problem. When it is not, such attribution has been made primarily on the basis of conceptual similarity and publication sequence. Such linkages are, of course, speculative and should be viewed as such.

[16] The documentation associated with the multi-problem client is quite persuasive. The reader should see the work of Hollingshead and Redlich (1958), Riessman, et al. (1964), Davis (1952), and Miller, W. B., (1958) as examples of this.

This has prompted social theorists in recent years to study the attitudinal and cultural concomitants of poverty. The circumstances and stresses with which the disadvantaged must constantly cope may be unique enough to create attitudinal, conceptual, and social barriers between those who are in the mainstream of the world of work and those who are not.[18] It is the presumption of this psychological distance between those who would benefit from social welfare and rehabilitation services (the clients) and those who have traditionally provided them (the professionals) that underlies the argument for the indigenous worker.

Harrington's work has been important in several ways. It has stressed the hidden structural barriers to economic and psychosocial viability;[19] highlighted vulnerability as well as disability and thereby clarified the plight of people at risk;[20] dramatized the concept of the multiproblem client; documented the need to go beyond technical training; and emphasized the attitudinal and emotional obstacles to entering the world of work.

THE NEW CAREERS CONCEPT

No discussion of the antecedents of paraprofessional use would be complete without documenting the contributions of Arthur Pearl, Robert Reiff, and Frank Riessman. While Harrington's work set the stage for the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the thinking of these three men, notably Riessman, set forces in motion for subsequent amendments to this legislation as well as for legislation in labor, health, social services, rehabilitation, and corrections that would come to be designated as the New Careers amendments. A consideration of this thinking is in order before reviewing the legislation.

People who have written about the times (1962-1965), notably Gartner (1971) and Haskell (1969), date the beginning of this impetus from the Mobilization for Youth (MFY) program carried out in 1963 on New York City's Lower

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[17] The literature dealing with this phenomenon is extensive. For further elaboration of the subtle determinism of these economic forces, the reader is referred especially to Kozol (1967), Kriesberg (1963), and Riessman (1962).

[18] The notion of a distinct "subculture of poverty", as exemplified in the writings of Bergel (1962) and Lewis (1966), is a matter of some dispute among sociologists (Roach and Gursalin, 1967). A good exposition of the basic differences in explanation, centering in the subcultural versus the situational approach, can be found in a recent book by Kriesberg (1970).

[19] The impact of his book on the thinking behind community based social action programs has been extensive. His book is credited with having influenced the Kennedy Administration to begin drafting the legislative underpinnings of the War on Poverty. Furthermore, its appearance coincided and was quite compatible with the emergence of community organization strategies within social work, expanded notions of disability within rehabilitation, and the concepts of ecological intervention within psychology and psychiatry.

[20] In so doing it revealed the need for a broadened mission for manpower policy, eloquently argued by Bakke (1969).

East Side. This program was different from many of its predecessors in that people who resided in the community to which the program was addressed were intentionally given key roles. These people, whom Riessman subsequently called new nonprofessionals (1963), were considered important in establishing relationships between the agency and the community.

Insights gained from MFY and other programs enabled Reiff and Riessman to publish their monograph *The Indigenous Nonprofessional* (1964), in which they distinguished between two main types of paraprofessional workers. One was an extension of the professional: he was recruited from the same social background, had the same attitudes and values, and had begun to aspire to the same educational objectives. They referred to this middle-class paraprofessional as the "ubiquitous nonprofessional." The other was the "indigenous nonprofessional," an extension of the client rather than the professional and native to a geographic area (hence the term indigenous). He was believed to be able to bridge the gap between the professional and the client. Implied in the idea of indigenous nonprofessional was a complex of "special skills for establishing communication across class lines" (Reiff and Riessman, 1964, p. 8).[21]

Another concept put forth in the monograph was to use as paraprofessionals people with backgrounds of problems similar to those of the clients. Riessman's advocacy was based on what he called the "helper therapy" principle. In a subsequent article he stated there was ample precedent for the ". . . use of people with a problem to help other people who have the same problem in a more severe form" (Riessman, 1965b, p. 27). He argued that although there was a need for firm research evidence to prove these programs were really effective, a growing body of reports, many *admittedly* impressionistic (the emphasis is Riessman's), claimed that improvement was seen in the giver more often than in the receiver of help. Thus, in addition to pointing up the ability of indigenous workers to bridge a communication gap, Reiff and Riessman advocated their use on the grounds that the very act of helping might provide therapeutic benefits to workers who were experiencing the same problems as their clients.

In their writings up to this point Riessman and his associates had emphasized the potential benefits from the use of paraprofessionals. Furthermore, they had stressed isolated role concepts and focused their attention on entry-level positions. In subsequent work Pearl and Riessman (1965) expanded these notions in several ways. First, they began to emphasize the need for specialized backup services to help these new kinds of workers adjust to the world of work they would be entering. Secondly, they discussed the need to provide new workers with educational and training opportunities leading to credentials. Finally, and this was most important, they went beyond the notion of entry jobs and advocated the creation of careers for paraprofessionals through continuous funding and mechanisms (e.g., job restructuring, educational leave) that would increase opportunities for advancement. These characteristics–entry-level jobs, supportive services, employment security, continuing training and education, advancement to full professional status–came to define the New Careers concept. They would also turn out to be important facets of the legislation that was to follow.

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[21] The concept of indigenousness, particularly with reference to these special skills, will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

LEGISLATIVE MILESTONES

Harrington's *Other America* was not located in any one place. However, in the presidential election campaign of 1960, it was symbolized by the state of West Virginia and the Appalachian region, whose plight was seen to be the result of insular poverty. This concept led to the development of legislation designed to provide massive assistance to a defined geographic area.

In May 1961, the Area Redevelopment Act (ARA) was passed. Although limited in concept, as Harrington was later to point out, its approach to manpower development constituted a significant breakthrough. It was based on the premise that economic restoration and rehabilitation could not take place without recognizing manpower as a resource to be developed. The ARA was thus the first in a series of legislative acts to incorporate manpower programs intended to increase skills and provide occupational and career-oriented training. This common thread in the manpower legislation of the 1960's reflected a growing awareness that a manpower revolution had occurred. Levine (1968) cites it as the turning point in the development of an active manpower policy in the United States. As we shall see, the legislation was sometimes limited and did not always accomplish its purposes. It created a legacy of mixed motives in manpower use that is still with us today. It was, however, an attempt to deal with the problems and issues discussed in the initial sections of this chapter.

We shall not discuss all this legislation in detail. Excellent summaries of the legislative programs, with particular emphasis on their implications for paraprofessionals, have been prepared by Russell Nixon (1969a, 1969b). We shall examine in this narrative only those legislative actions that have significantly influenced the use of the paraprofessional worker. This material is presented in Table 1. The service domains covered by the legislation are far-reaching: health, mental health, welfare, rehabilitation, education, community development, conservation, and corrections. Only the most recent legislation (1967-1970), however, identifies the paraprofessional as the specific target of legislative programs.

Several of these acts stand out. The Manpower Development and Training Act (1962) was significant in that, for the first time, machinery was set up to provide training for workers facing displacement due to technological change. As such it was directed to the vulnerable worker so graphically described by Harrington.

The Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) of 1964, the beginning of what would come to be called the War on Poverty, represented another thrust. Its philosophy represented a radical departure from earlier legislation by emphasizing the participation of residents of target communities in the planning and implementation of programs for services they would receive. The concept of "maximum feasible participation," later to be hotly debated, opened the door for an entirely new strategy for the use of manpower. The spirit of this legislation was closely related to the philosophy of Riessman and his colleagues.

In 1966, the Scheuer Amendments to the EOA were passed. These have been viewed by many as the legislative beginnings of the New Careers program. Title II, Section 205 (e), of the Amendments empowered the Manpower Administration of the Department of Labor to enter into agreements for training and employment programs for low income or unemployed persons in fields including, but not limited to, health, education, welfare, neighborhood development, and public safety. Most importantly, these programs were expected to stimulate the development of entry-level job opportunities; provide maximum opportunities for advancement in employment; encourage continuous employment through programs that were not federally subsidized; and combine a range of supportive and educational services for the new workers. These requirements became the first official Labor Department guidelines for the New Careers program.

Legislation affecting other fields of service quickly followed. Reacting to skill shortages and restrictive methods of dividing labor in the health field, Congress enacted the Allied Health Professions Training Act in 1966. The use of teacher aides and other paraprofessional personnel in education was stimulated by amendments, in 1967, to the Higher Education Act and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

In public welfare a significant legislative change took place through the Harris Amendments (1967) to the Social Security Act. These amendments required that the state plans of public welfare agencies be expanded to include provisions for the training and use of paid subprofessional staff, with principal emphasis on the employment of recipients. This component was to become an operational requirement for state agencies incorporated in the Federal Register (Titles IV-A, IV-B, January, 1969).

In the rehabilitation field the 1968 amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act set up special grants to foster the use of paraprofessional workers in rehabilitation services. Particular emphasis was placed on providing employment opportunities for handicapped persons being served by the various rehabilitation agencies.

To provide liaison among the various programs stimulated by all this legislation, Secretary Finch in 1969 established the HEW Office of New Careers in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration. At this point both HEW and the Department of Labor had clearly defined administrative mechanisms to coordinate the various programs made possible by the legislation in the latter half of the 1960's.

Table 1
Summary of Legislation Affecting Utilization of Paraprofessional Workers

Year	*Legislation*	*Summary*
1962	Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA)	Authorized programs for training and retraining unemployed youth. Applied also to workers facing job displacement due to technological and economic changes. Programs were to be carried out by vocational, technical, and junior college level institutions.
1963	Vocational Education Act	Specifically addressed to the preparation for employment. Called for occupational training to be realistically related to changes in employment opportunities. Objective was to relate vocational education more closely to emerging occupations and industries and less to agricultural activities. Set up cooperative relationships between the employment service (USES) and vocational education systems. Provided for the exchange of information on hiring practices to be used in curriculum design.
1963	Amendments to MDTA	Concentrated on overcoming restrictions and exclusions in Act of 1962. Increased the training allowances for young trainees, lowered the original MDTA eligibility age (from 17 to 16), extended training duration (from 52 to 72 weeks). Placed heavier emphasis on basic literacy skills.
1964	Economic Opportunity Act (EOA)	Legislation authorizing War on Poverty. Provided expanded services and job opportunities to poverty populations. Emphasized and required evidence of participation of the poor in programs funded under Act. Fostered administrative machinery which bypassed established state and federal channels by designating Community Action organizations and planning councils as recipients of funds.
1965	Amendments to EOA (Nelson Amendments)	Provided employment for elderly poor people in conservation and community beautification activities.
1966	Amendments to EOA (Scheuer Amendments)	Specifically directed to the chronically unemployed adult over 21 years of age. Provided entry level employment in the public service sector in other than professional positions. Required that program plans contain provisions for training and advancement.
1966	Allied Health Professions Training Act	Made provisions for grants for training new types of health technologists and technicians.

Table 1 (continued)

Year	*Legislation*	*Summary*
1967	Amendments to EOA	Expanded population eligible for programs set up under the 1966 Scheuer Amendments. Reduced the eligible age for adults to 18 years of age or older. Made both unemployed and low income people eligible for jobs in programs. Placed additional emphasis on New Career opportunities in fields such as health, education, welfare, neighborhood redevelopment, and public safety.
1967	Amendments to Higher Education Act	Provided for programs or projects to train teacher aides or other paraprofessional educational personnel.
1967	Amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act	Encouraged maximum hiring and adequate utilization and acceptance of auxiliary personnel (e.g., teacher aides) on a permanent basis in both elementary and secondary schools.
1967	Amendments to the Social Security Act (Harris Amendments)	Required that state plans submitted by public welfare agencies be modified to include provisions for the training and effective use of paid subprofessional staff, with particular emphasis on the full-time and part-time employment of recipients and other persons of low income.
1968	Amendments to the Vocational Education Act	Encouraged research and training in vocational education programs designed to meet special vocational education needs of young people. Provided educational opportunities for new and emerging careers in fields such as mental and physical health, crime prevention and corrections, welfare, education, municipal services, child care, and recreation. Placed particular emphasis on entry positions requiring less than professional education.
1968	Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act	Authorized grant programs to provide training as community service officers for residents of specific localities who did not meet police department entrance standards. Programs were directed toward police-community relations.
1968	Amendments to the Juvenile Delinquency and Control Act	Provided for the development of special programs to train young people and adults in diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of youths who were in danger of becoming delinquent.
1968	Health Manpower Act	Authorized special project grants to assist schools of medicine, dentistry, osteopathy, pharmacy, optometry, podiatry, and veterinary medicine to

Table 1 (continued)

Year	*Legislation*	*Summary*
		develop training for new levels or new types of personnel.
1968	Amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act	Provided for special project grants to state VRA and other non-profit (public or private) agencies to stimulate use of paraprofessional New Careerists in rehabilitative services and to create New Career opportunities for the handicapped being served by VR agencies.
1969	Amendments to EOA	Created a special title (Title I-E) for New Careers programs and separated them from other manpower programs.

MOTIVES FOR USING PARAPROFESSIONALS

In the preceding sections we have traced the origins of the movement to use paraprofessional workers in the United States. Since the early 1960's the movement has changed in character and complexity. For one thing few people any longer see the use of paraprofessionals as merely a stopgap measure for making the best of a bad situation. Even though the employment of paraprofessionals is not new, many planners and educators seem finally to have abandoned the notion that some day all human service workers will possess the traditional terminal degree. Highly vocal advocates have identified the positive advantages of using the paraprofessional, mainly stressing the contribution the indigenous worker can make because of his unique background. The movement has also highlighted the therapeutic benefits that apparently accrue to the worker as part of the helping process. Finally, thoughtful questions have been raised about the effectiveness of traditional professional training and education, particularly the relationship between education, credentials, and employment effectiveness.[22]

The motives for using paraprofessionals are diverse. Because they have profound implications for the selection, training, assignment, deployment, and evaluation of such workers, they should be examined more closely. In so doing we shall be drawing on the work of Grosser et al. (1969) and Katan (1970).

Solving the Manpower Shortage

The principal reason for the visibility of the paraprofessional and for using him seems to be the severe shortage of skilled manpower in the social welfare and rehabilitation services field. Of the hundreds of articles reviewed for this narrative, at least 60 percent made reference, usually with some documentation, to such a shortage.

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[22] For a discussion of education and employment the reader should see the work of Berg (1970) and Illich (1971). S. M. Miller's (1971) treatment of the credentials barrier in employment should also be reviewed.

Summaries of manpower needs in various SWRS fields are made in the work of Doster (1970) in public health, Hylton (1966) in child welfare, James (1967) in physical therapy, Levenson, et al. (1969) in mental health, Robertson (1967) in juvenile delinquency, Sieracki (1968) in counseling, Sigurdson (1969) in corrections, and Steinberg, et al. (1969) in public health. These estimates and the inconsistencies in them have been discussed in an earlier publication in this series (Katzell, et al., 1971), and will not be recapitulated here.

The shortage of SWRS personnel cannot be disputed. It is the focus of those who speak for the various disciplines and professions eventually responsible for staffing the service delivery systems. But to attribute the momentum of the paraprofessional movement only to the desire to solve a manpower shortage would, in our judgment, be an oversimplification.

Provision of Employment

Given a manpower shortage in the human services and chronic unemployment within certain groups of society, a logical approach has been to use the human services to provide jobs for the poor. This reasoning inspired much of the legislation summarized in Table 1. While this approach sounds simple, it is difficult to put into effective practice. Ferman (1968) has documented the problems associated with this kind of job development. The New Careers concept, emphasizing continuous employment and advancement opportunities, has added new complexities. Depending upon one's point of view, employment can be seen as either an end in itself or a means of access to the occupational mainstream of society.

Increasing the Efficiency of Services

The third motive for employing the paraprofessional stems from the recognition that levels of skill vary greatly among current and potential workers and that different levels of skill have not been used efficiently in most service delivery systems. The motive to increase the efficiency of services by more efficient use of the various levels of skill represented in the workforce focuses on the division of labor between professionals and paraprofessionals.

The assumption behind this motive is that much of what professionals do might be done by persons with less training and skill. The professional, freed from tasks which do not require high levels of skill, could then devote his time to more appropriate activities. This theme is much in evidence in the early writing (1960-1965) in social work and rehabilitation.[23]

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[23] For summaries of this type of formulation the reader is referred to the work of Schwartz, E. E., (1966).

Implementing this idea assumes that an acceptable rationale for the allocation of work has been found. As of this writing, no single framework exists. Documentation of investigations in this area indicates that, although much effort has been expended (Barker and Briggs, 1966), the experimental evidence upon which one might base a choice is either inconclusive or nonexistent. There are some (e.g., Beck, 1969) who claim that such differentiation is inherently impossible.

Increasing the Effectiveness of Services

In the diversity of motivation underlying the use of paraprofessionals, the most heated rhetoric has been generated by the argument that SWR services no longer meet the needs of their constituencies (Cloward and Epstein, 1967). The argument takes a variety of forms. Some contend that the process of extended education often brings about undesirable changes which impede creativity and the ability to respond (Illich, 1971). Some stress the class distance between helper and client (Reiff and Riessman, 1964; Pearl and Riessman, 1965). Others blame the autonomy of the professions (Haug and Sussman, 1969; Reiff, 1969). Still others stress the waste and administrative inefficiencies of the delivery systems (Brozen, 1970).

The reaction to this situation has been a cry for relevance, to be brought about by the increased participation of clients in both the planning and the delivery of services. Unlike the first three motives, this one assumes that all or part of the present service configuration is inappropriate, and that insights into this deficiency and the mechanisms to overcome it can come from the client population. The most compelling illustration of this philosophy is the Economic Opportunity Act and the New Careers legislation that followed it.

Provision of Therapeutic Work Experience

Earlier in this chapter the helper therapy principle as elaborated by Riessman (1965b) was described. It originated from work done in mental illness, drug addiction, and alcoholism, and makes two claims: that placing individuals with problems in a role helping others with similar problems will initially have therapeutic benefits for the helper; and that as these benefits are realized, helpers will become more effective workers and have a positive impact on their clients. The evidence to support these claims is limited. Perhaps because of this and the lack of analogous situations in social welfare and rehabilitation to which the principle might apply, it has not received as much attention as the other motives for using paraprofessionals.

IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter we have traced the broad origins of the paraprofessional movement. Our contention that this movement was a complex phenomenon created by diverse forces and set in motion by a varied array of publics is borne out by a review of the literature of the past decade.

The conceptual framework presented in Chapter 1 depicted this complexity. We spoke of strategies for using workers as being both varied and dynamic, the end results of interactions between forces within and outside an organization. These strategies can be readily identified in the narrative sections of Chapter 2. In our judgment they have five major objectives:

- the relief of problems caused by manpower shortages;
- the provision of entry jobs and continuous employment for the poor;
- the need to use differentially skilled personnel more efficiently;
- the pressure to increase the effectiveness and relevance of service; and
- the desire to provide transitional therapeutic work experiences.

A clear understanding of each of these objectives is absolutely essential for rational manpower planning. Each calls for different activities and has different consequences for personnel utilization.[24] Their implementation calls for actions that may be incompatible. This can quickly be illustrated in the area of job construction. If one is concerned with relieving the pressure of unemployment, one will concentrate on techniques that result in more jobs. On the other hand, if one is primarily concerned with the problem of effectiveness and relevance, one will focus on techniques that result in new jobs. In pursuing this objective, job elimination may become more important than job addition. If one is concerned with the efficient use of skills, one will focus not on the absolute number of jobs but on the division of labor.

In like manner, each of these manpower objectives will have implications for the type of workers sought and recruited, for selection criteria, for training, and so forth. In subsequent chapters we shall examine these factors more closely. Particular emphasis will be placed on the existing literature to elaborate the problems and issues highlighted by others and to suggest areas where empirical data are needed.

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[24] As used here the term personnel utilization is a sequential process consisting of the following steps: preparation for work, recruitment, selection, training and orientation, job development and construction, placement, deployment, supervision, performance evaluation and mobility. As the reader will readily see, these constitute the elements of the conceptual framework described in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 3

THE PARAPROFESSIONAL WORKER

SUMMARY

The term paraprofessional in this document refers to any individual who lacks the education and experience traditionally required for social welfare and rehabilitation service jobs. In the literature there is no agreement on the name to be given to workers who do not possess traditional qualifications. Such names as nonprofessional, subprofessional, indigenous nonprofessional, ubiquitous nonprofessional, ancillary worker, and New Careerist have been used. The names chosen seem to have a variety of objectives, such as: advocating a new dimension of manpower use; gaining eligibility for program support; offending the fewest number of people. They help shed light on some basic differences in manpower strategies in the various fields. In the rehabilitation field the names refer to a set of tasks; in social welfare they signify status distinctions work roles.

Precise data about the size of the paraprofessional population in the United States are extremely difficult to determine because of differences in terminology, census classifications, complexities of legislation, and the lack of enumeration mechanisms in agencies. Estimates place the number of paraprofessionals currently employed in the SWRS labor force at 76,000.

Studies of the characteristics of paraprofessionals are not numerous. They vary widely in the number of paraprofessionals surveyed, the characteristics investigated, and the scientific rigor of the investigation. However, some consistent findings do appear. Paraprofessional workers are predominantly female, are likely to be members of a racial or ethnic minority, most frequently black, and usually have a low socio-economic status and limited education.

Empirical investigations of paraprofessional attitudes, values, interests, and other psychological orientations are rare. There has been a tendency to construct cultural composites of the paraprofessional from demographic data and then attribute values based on general sociological knowledge of such cultural groupings.

The concept of indigenousness has been defined as the paraprofessional's cultural affiliation or shared problem experiences with the client group. Both these links emphasize similar demographic data for clients and workers. It is argued that if this similarity exists more fundamental similarities between the two groups can be assumed, giving promise that clients will receive more relevant and meaningful services. Little research has been undertaken to test these assumptions.

Chapter 2 traced the antecedents of the paraprofessional movement in the United States to explain the diverse motives for the utilization of this type of worker. This chapter summarizes what is known about the size of the paraprofessional population in SWRS settings and describes the personal characteristics (e.g., demography, attitudes, values, and expectancies) of such workers. It also describes the difficulties of defining a universe of workers and the problems of gaining access to them as respondents in any field investigation.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Any research effort, based either on literature analyses or field investigations, requires a definition of the limits of the population or universe to be studied. As Chapter 2 explained, legislative and philosophical developments during the 1960's resulted in hiring of paraprofessional workers in almost all human services. Our universe does not include all these workers. We have specifically excluded paraprofessionals in the health field (medics, licensed practical nurses, and dental technicians); in law enforcement (patrolman aides); in mental health and psychiatry (psychiatric aides and community mental health workers); and in education (teacher aides). Given the ephemeral definitions of social services (Gilbert, G. R., 1971), this appears a prudent way to proceed. However, the reader is reminded that in the literature reviewed it was not always possible to make these distinctions, so that there is not a complete correspondence between coverage of the literature and the universe studied.

One area of interest is workers in the social welfare field, which includes social work activities as well as activities carried out by paraprofessionals in a variety of Community Action Programs. A second area of interest is paraprofessionals in the rehabilitation field, excluding the autonomous paramedical career streams such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech pathology, audiology, and physical medicine.[28] We shall focus our attention on those paraprofessionals whose work is centered in the counseling process and the activities that support it.

We use the term paraprofessional workers to describe male and female employees of public and private establishments who deliver social welfare and rehabilitation services, and who do not possess the credentials (either education or experience) traditionally viewed as necessary for such work. The workers in our universe have several basic characteristics. First, they are likely to perform a wide range of job activities. Some of these traditionally may have been done by professional workers, others may be new activities for which paraprofessionals appear to be uniquely suited. All workers, however, are engaged primarily in the delivery of services. We exclude those engaged primarily in clerical, maintenance, or custodial activities, unless the performance of such tasks is clearly part of a career sequence leading to service-oriented jobs within a given establishment. Secondly, we are interested in paid workers and, although they are quite numerous, have excluded paraprofessional volunteers. Finally, the workers we call paraprofessionals usually do not have the education or experience associated with professional status in either a merit system classification of positions or various professional associations, e.g., National Association of Social Workers (NASW), American Psychological Association (APA), National Rehabilitation Association (NRA).[29]

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[28] The rehabilitation field at present is seen to be in need of a basic change in scope and character (Newman, 1970). This view includes two related themes: (1) there has been too much historical emphasis on physical disability and too little emphasis on psychosocial functioning; and (2) there should be more balance between the health professions (e.g., medicine, nursing, physical therapy) and the social professions (e.g., social work, counseling, gerontology).

The term establishment describes an organization, or unit of an organization, producing similar goods or services at a single physical location and maintaining separate fiscal and personnel records. We do not include all the establishments in which paraprofessionals are employed. Our interest covers, but is not necessarily limited to, the following types: social planning, development, and funding organizations; community and neighborhood development organizations; individual and family social service organizations; neighborhood centers; child development and day care facilities; group residential or training facilities for adults, children, or special categories of people (limited to establishments where medical or psychiatric care is not the major function); and agencies serving the blind and disabled (can include rehabilitation centers and workshops).

SOME SEMANTIC DIFFICULTIES

Since it is expected that this population will serve as the core of respondents for subsequent field investigations, careful definition is necessary. Our research on paraprofessionals in the human services has revealed a wide array of descriptive terms. There is no common language or terminology to describe workers, tasks, settings, services, or organizations. The diversity is most marked in the terms for workers. The literature variously describes them as nonprofessional, preprofessional, aide, aid, new nonprofessional, New Careerist, paraprofessional, subprofessional, indigenous nonprofessional, client staff, indigenous paraprofessional, second careerist, new paraprofessional, ubiquitous nonprofessional, indigenous worker, ancillary worker, supportive worker, and new professional. More permutations may be expected.

Many authors have used these terms rather loosely, others have exercised care in choosing a designation. When care was taken, writers seem to have had one or more of the following objectives:

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[29] At present there is no clear demarcation between professional and paraprofessional status on the basis of formal education. Furthermore, educational attainment can be a misleading way of making such a distinction. It can be argued that the presence or absence of an educational credential is no guarantee that a worker can or cannot perform at a professional level. Educational attainment is being used in the SWRS field, however, to distinguish professionals from nonprofessionals in merit system classifications and in professional associations. In social work the most commonly used line of demarcation now seems to be the baccalaureate degree. In rehabilitation there is less agreement on where the line should be drawn. In our work we shall use formal education as a descriptive correlate of paraprofessionalism rather than as a definition of it.

- to advocate an independent value and status for the new worker (e.g., career mobility, worker autonomy);
- to describe the way workers ought to be used;
- to avoid the image (when "paraprofessional" is sued) of the new worker as someone inferior to the professional;
- to select a term used in a piece of legislation in order to become eligible for program support; and
- to offend the fewest number of people by intentionally coining a new word with an obscure meaning.

There is little consistency in the choice of designations. In addition to the differences among writers, the same author will frequently change designations in successive articles to reflect a shift in his own thinking or in keeping with whatever term happens to be popular at the time.[30]

Another aspect of the terminology problem has to do with the ways in which the various titles are used. In some instances they serve as adjectives to describe tasks (e.g., subprofessional activities),[31] reflecting a tendency to think of the differential use of staff in terms of job, rather than worker, characteristics. This is the classical approach: first define and classify jobs, then infer worker characteristics from job specifications, and proceed to find incumbents for those positions.

In recent years the same terms have come to be applied to people rather than tasks (e.g., subprofessional workers, paraprofessionals). This may be attributed to the fact that much of the paraprofessional legislation has given preference in hiring to specific groups of people (e.g., the poor, neighborhood residents, former recipients). This is a departure from the usual pattern of recruitment and hiring practices. In the newer strategy the incumbents are specified from the outset, skills and abilities are inferred from their demographic characteristics, and then jobs are defined to take advantage of or to compensate for these pre-existing worker traits.[32]

The difference between these two approaches reflects fundamentally different strategies of manpower use in the various service fields. These differences are rarely made explicit in the literature, however.[33]

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[30] In the early days of the movement (1963-1966), the term nonprofessional was most commonly used by people shaping policy in the area of community action. In social work the term subprofessional has had persistent popularity (particularly among MSWs). In recent years, because of the stigma attached to these two designations, the word paraprofessional has been used with increasing frequency in a wide variety of settings.

[31] This usage occurred frequently in the early literature (1962-1966) of paraprofessionalism. Although still found it is far less common now.

[32] The characteristics of these and other strategies of job creation will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

[33] One instance where the latter strategy has been made explicit is the hire-now-train-later principle underlying the Public Services Career Program (DOL, 1969c). Many of those trained under PSC auspices will enter establishments providng SWRS services.

A final source of confusion is that the legislation provides no uniform eligibility criteria, even though much of it is clearly aimed at increasing the use of various groups of people as paraprofessionals. This is not surprising because most legislation is rarely enacted or implemented as a whole. Thus, eligibility for one program may be defined in terms of geography (e.g., resident in model neighborhood), for another in terms of status of functioning (e.g., physical disability). Contributing to this confusion is the fact that the reporting and monitoring systems of the various agencies administering such programs do not use comparable classification categories for compiling enumeration data on program participants.

Despite the many terms that have been conjured up over the years, no single designation has been generally acceptable. Perhaps, as Lynton (1967) has indicated, the disagreement over titles is really a symptom of the general dissatisfaction with the menial status associated with paraprofessional workers and the jobs they perform. It is also a commentary on the paraprofessional movement as a whole—a curious mixture of deep commitment, conceptual ambiguity, and power politics.

DIFFICULTIES IN ESTIMATING POPULATION

In any study attempting to describe a complicated universe, information about the size, character, and location of the population is essential. If the study includes a field investigation requiring the use of samples of respondents, such information is of even greater importance. Unfortunately, precise data about the paraprofessional population in the United States are extremely difficult to come by for several reasons.

First, there is the problem of terminology. Since no standardized definition of the paraprofessional is in use, one is rarely certain of the criteria on which the available numbers are based.

Secondly, a significant portion of the literature appears to have been written to maintain a sense of hope, growth, and continuity within the paraprofessional movement. As a result, when figures are given they are often cumulative totals of the people who have gone through various training programs. This is like taking a census by counting all the people who have ever lived in a particular place. One cannot rely on such figures in estimating the current size of the paraprofessional population.

Thirdly, the movement has been influenced by 100 separate grant-in-aid programs authorized under 35 different acts of Congress and administered by eight departments and agencies.[34] Each agency is responsible for a portion of the population, and its enumerations represent only a part of the total picture. In addition, different agencies use different criteria to compile their data. Some data on paraprofessionals are compiled by programs, some by demographic characteristics, others by geographic boundaries, and still others by type of employer. Consequently, when one adds these figures, one is not sure whether groups of paraprofessionals are being left out or counted several times over.

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[34] This refers to the broad field of human services and not only to the SWRS segment defined earlier.

Fourthly, not all agencies compile data on paraprofessionals. In the peak years of the movement (1965-1969), when visibility was high and funding extensive, agencies tended to maintain more complete records than they do at present.[35] Data on paraprofessional employment in the private sector (e.g., voluntary social service and rehabilitation agencies) are even more difficult to obtain because fewer mechanisms exist for processing information.

The adequacy of data compiled from a network of agencies depends entirely on the completeness of response. Completeness is not always achieved. For example, during January and February of 1971 the Community Development Administration (CDA) of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sent questionnaires to all the 147 Model Cities projects, asking them to supply data on their activities under the Resident Employment Training Plan programs. The survey included questions about numbers of people, demographic characteristics, location, and type of employment, as well as questions on paraprofessionals.[36] Of the 147 cities queried, only 75 returned completed questionnaires.

Despite these difficulties it is possible to estimate the number of paraprofessionals in the SWRS field. Data on paraprofessionals began to appear around 1967 and reflected the fact that most of the employment opportunities were created by the anti-poverty legislation.

Schmais (1967) reported that by the end of 1965 25,000 nonprofessional jobs existed in the Community Action Programs of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), many of them created as a result of Title V of the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) work experience programs and involving the broad range of social welfare service activities we have described in an earlier section. Schmais also indicated that in 1966 average monthly totals for nonprofessional employment in the CAP agencies had stabilized at about 40,000 people. Riessman (1967) stated that close to 75,000 new nonprofessionals had found employment by this time.[37] Still higher figures were recorded by Liebert (1967). She reported that, as of August 1967, OEO had authorized 131,000 nonprofessional positions in its network of CAP agencies and had filled 106,000 of them. There was no indication of where these people were deployed or of the types of activities in which they were engaged.

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[35] The compilation and tabulation of such data can be an expensive procedure Several agencies indicated in personal communications that with less funding in recent years such enumeration procedures no longer have a high priority and have either been cut back or eliminated.

[36] These data, however, are difficult to interpret. Model Cities programs have no fixed demographic definition of the "subprofessional" (their designation). As of this writing, the Community Development Administration definition describes the subprofessional as "any individual employed in a position paying less than $8,000 per year." (Personal communication from Community Development Administration).

[37] This number, significantly larger than Schmais's 40,000 figure, probably includes those paraprofessionals carrying out education-oriented programs under Head Start. As of that time, an estimated 26,000 paraprofessionals were so involved.

Subsequent estimates are still higher. In 1968 Scheuer stated that 300,000 nonprofessionals were employed in various public services. The following year he estimated that upwards of 500,000 nonprofessional workers had been employed in various public services between 1965 and 1969. Neither estimate gave any indication of how many workers there were in the various service fields; the second estimate was clearly a cumulative total reflecting the impact of the New Careers (Scheuer Amendments) Programs first funded in the spring of 1967. An article by Gartner (1969a), covering the same period, placed the total figure at somewhat over 250,000 paraprofessionals. The bulk of these (200,000) were individuals who had participated in the EOA Title V work experience programs.[38] He indicated that "tens of thousands" of paraprofessionals were being used in social service agencies under the 1967 Social Security Amendments (the Harris Amendments, P. L. 90-248).[39] His total also contained 1,300 preprofessionals whom, he indicated, the U.S. Employment Service (USES) was adding to its work force under the provisions of these amendments.

In 1970, data on the New Careers Programs began to appear. The most comprehensive figures were contained in a report published by the National Institute for New Careers of the University Research Corporation (1970a), which described the progress of 115 New Careers projects started between the spring of 1967 and July 1970.[40] The report indicated that these projects had involved an estimated cumulative total of 20,000 enrollees, of whom about 10 percent were in social service training programs.[41]

In 1970, the New Careers Program was subsumed under the Public Services Career Program (PSC), created by the Department of Labor in 1969.[42] The PSC was

> . . . a new manpower program created to secure, within merit principles, permanent employment for the disadvantaged in public service agencies and to stimulate upgrading of current employees, thereby meeting public sector manpower needs. (DOL, 1969c, p. 1)

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[38] This number includes 100,000 paraprofessionals in the CAP agencies and approximately 95,000 involved with Head Start.

[39] Survey data gathered subsequently indicate that Gartner's figures were an overestimate.

[40] These projects were funded under the Scheuer Amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act and were a mixture of employment and training experiences.

[41] The definition of social services is not clear in the document. However, we felt that the kinds of activities involved come fairly close to those in our earlier delineation of the SWRS field.

[42] These changes involved the diversion of funds from the Job Corps and the Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC).

The program was divided into four parts. Plan A was designed to stimulate the creation of new entry positions and the upgrading of state, county, and local government employees. Plan B had basically the same purposes but the institutions receiving such funds had to be recipients of federal grants-in-aid. Plan C was directed specifically to developing new careers in the human services and was the continuation of the Scheuer Amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act. Plan D was similar to A and B but was directed to federal service agencies.

The 1971 Manpower Report of the President states that 3,800 persons had been enrolled in the New Careers segment (Plan C) of PSC by January 1970, and 12,200 in all segments (Plans A through D) by the following December. This information attests to the growth of the PSC program and indicates the important role it is likely to play in introducing the disadvantaged worker into the human services sector of the labor force. As with the other data, there was no indication of how the various enrollees were deployed and in which service area they would eventually be working.[43] The status of these people is also not clear. Given the hire-now-train-later philosophy of PSC, one does not know whether these people should be classified as trainees or workers.

Perhaps the most comprehensive data on paraprofessionals in social welfare were those collected by the Office of Research, Demonstration, and Training (SRS) in response to a request from Senator Fred Harris to Secretary Finch for information on the training and use of subprofessionals by state and local agencies in programs authorized by the 1967 Amendments to the Social Security Act. The report (ORDT, 1970), covering 51 states and territories, stated that 10,237 paraprofessionals were employed as of March 1970, the bulk of these (8,128) in jobs classified as general social service jobs, including eligibility determination workers. A large number (1,948) were employed in providing homemaker services. The remainder (161) were distributed among a variety of other jobs.

Data on paraprofessionals in rehabilitation are much more limited. Two surveys indicate that the use of the paraprofessional is less extensive in rehabilitation than in social welfare. As part of the Sixth Institute on Rehabilitation Services (Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff, 1968), questionnaires were sent to 91 state agencies of vocational rehabilitation, inquiring about their use of support personnel.[44] Of 58 who responded, 19 were agencies for the blind and 39 were general agencies.

They were asked whether they had a formal program for the use of support people. A high proportion (71 percent) replied that they did not. Of the 13 agencies that did have formal programs, 11 had initiated them since 1964, which corresponds roughly to the beginnings and growth of the general paraprofessional movement outlined in Chapter 2. As of 1967, the year the survey was carried out, the agencies reported employing 297 support or paraprofessional personnel, the great majority of them (257) as rehabilitation aides.

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[43] It is known, however, that there are approximately 1,500 to 2,000 disadvantaged persons in Plan B training projects in agencies operating SRS programs (ORDT, 1970).

[44] Some of the data collected by the survey are difficult to interpret because a portion of the definition of support personnel was inadvertently omitted from the questionnaire.

As part of the National Rehabilitation Association's New Careers in Rehabilitation Project (undated, c. 1969), inquiries to 88 state vocational rehabilitation agencies[45] sought descriptive information about the use of preprofessionals.[46] Of the 85 who responded, 38 were experimenting with the use of preprofessional personnel and 10 had just begun or were about to begin to use such workers. The report contained no information on the actual number of preprofessionals being used at the time of the study. Despite its limitations it did give the clear impression that things had not changed considerably since the HEW Institute data were collected the year before.

The 1968 Amendments to the Vocational Rehabilitation Act promoted the use of paraprofessionals in rehabilitation. Section 15 of that Act increases VR services by expanding the client population to include "disadvantaged individuals and their families." Section 4 of the Act provides grants for programs designed to stimulate the entry and utilization of "nonprofessional" manpower into the rehabilitation field. Under this legislation, some 10 to 15 special projects are being administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration of HEW. As of this writing, tabulations of the number of enrollees are not available.

Table 2 summarizes the estimated number of paraprofessionals according to kinds of agencies in which they work and supporting legislation.

Despite precautions some overlap among the numbers cited may remain. The total in this table is much smaller than the hundreds of thousands of paraprofessionals reported, at one time or another, to have been at work in various fields. There are two reasons for this: we have restricted our estimates to the SWRS field; and, because we have attempted to convert training enrollment into employment figures, we have taken attrition into account.

Data on training retention rates are relatively scarce and available primarily from the New Careers programs. One study by Wilson, et al. (1969) involving a sample of 9,390 trainees revealed a rather low drop-out rate of 15 percent. Recent data depict a much higher rate. The 1971 Manpower Report of the President states that 40 percent of the trainees leave the New Careers program within the first six months (DOL, 1971, p. 43). In all likelihood the attrition rate falls somewhere between these two figures but is still high enough to constitute a problem for the management of paraprofessional training.

One reason for the high drop-out rate may be the trainee's awareness of the difficulty of finding a job. Paraprofessional training, like other work preparation programs, has been no guarantee of employment. Recognition of this has been an important reason for the hire-now-train-later philosophy of the Public Service

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[45] The report stated that the inquiries were "not tightly constructed" to yield data that could be statistically tabulated.

[46] There was little agreement on the definition of "preprofessional." This report highlights the difficulties created by different conceptions.

Table 2

Estimated Number of Paraprofessionals in Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Services

Sites	*Program or Legislation*	*Estimated Number*
State and Local Departments of Public Welfare	1967 Amendments to the Social Security Act	15,000[46a]
Various Public and Private SWRS Agencies	New Careers Projects under original Scheuer Amendments (1967-1970)	2,000[b]
OEO CAP Agencies and Various Delegate Agencies	EOA Title V Work Experience Programs	40,000[c]
Various State, County, and Local Agencies Administering SRS Programs	Public Service Careers Program—Plan B	2,000[d]
Various State, County, and Local Human Services Agencies	Public Service Careers Program—Plan C, New Careers	400[e]
Community Development Agencies	Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act of 1966 (Model Cities)	15,000[f]
Various State and Local Rehabilitation Agencies	Vocational Rehabilitation Act, 1968 Amendments	2,000[g]
	TOTAL	76,400

[46a] This number represents an unofficial estimate from the Office of Research, Demonstrations, and Training (SRS) of the number of paraprofessionals employed in 1971.

[b] This number is compiled from data obtained in 115 New Careers projects. These data yielded a cumulative estimated total of 20,000 trainees. Of this number it was estimated that 10 percent would be in SWRS programs under this plan (National Institute for New Careers, 1970).

[c] This figure is a conservative estimate. No accurate turnover data are available on paraprofessional employment. A cumulative total of 100,000 people has been scaled down by 60 percent to reflect cutbacks in OEO programs (Janssen, 1972) and high attrition rates (over 40 percent) in training (DOL, 1971).

[d] Based on estimates as of March, 1970 (DOL, 1971).

[e] Current number of trainees in this plan is estimated at 3,800 (DOL, 1971). This figure reflects the fact that only about 10 percent of New Careerists are expected to enter SWRS programs (National Institute for New Careers, 1970).

[f] This number is purely speculative. Current tabulations on resident paraprofessional employment are being compiled by the Community Development Administration, HUD. Summaries are not yet available.

[g] Estimates based on approximately 15 New Careers projects funded under Sections 4a(2)(C) and 4a(2)(D) of that legislation. Actual data are not available from Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Careers Program. In trying to understand the situations from which the data are drawn, one must also take into account the limited ability of many employers to hire and utilize paraprofessionals. Many writers, describing huge cadres of trainees, seem to believe the existing human services systems have an unlimited capacity to absorb such people and place them in useful jobs. This is not the case. Regardless of client or agency needs, most establishments are constrained by merit systems, budgets, and future appropriations.[47]

There is also turnover after the paraprofessionals are employed. Although data are virtually non-existent, predictions of both low turnover and high turnover can be argued. On the one hand, one might expect long tenures for most workers because marginal occupational skills limit their opportunities for alternative employment. On the other hand, one might predict a high turnover rate because the low status associated with paraprofessional jobs gives them little stake in a career in the SWRS field. Many of the factors attributed to high SWRS turnover (e.g., lack of promotion opportunities, poor supervision, lack of opportunity for professional development, underutilization) by Katzell, et al. (1971) are likely to be true for paraprofessional employment as well. If alternative employment opportunities are truly absent for most paraprofessionals, we may be dealing with low turnover and low morale. Obviously more definitive data are needed. Whatever the situation, however, the mobility patterns of paraprofessionals, in contrast with those of professional workers, are more likely to be determined by local labor market forces than by regional or national ones.

One final comment is in order with respect to Table 2. The reader will notice that it does not include separate estimates for SWRS workers employed in voluntary agencies or in the private sector. Some of these workers may be included in the totals for "various delegate and host agencies" under Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and Community Development Administration (CDA), but we have not been able to find any data on paraprofessional employment in the private sector of the SWRS field.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF WORKERS

In addition to compiling information about the number of paraprofessionals, we were also interested in synthesizing what was known about their personal characteristics. We wanted to explore more thoroughly the question, "What kind of person is the paraprofessional?"

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[47] An illustration may be found in data provided by Shephard (1969). He surveyed 130 cities with populations of 100,000 or more in the effort to find out the number of positions that could be filled by paraprofessionals using program funds available at that time (1968). His figures were limited to municipal employment. The resulting estimate, covering all areas of the human services, totaled 140,689 positions. To be sure, when one adds other cities and includes county, state, and federal employment, the number would be increased substantially. These data, however, suggest that the possibilities for hiring and absorbing paraprofessionals are not unlimited.

Most of the articles surveyed answered the question in an impressionistic and speculative manner. But there were some that provided specific information about paraprofessional workers in a variety of SWRS settings.

The most frequently reported data dealt with basic demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex, race, education level). Although limited, they do permit one to make preliminary inferences about more basic affective and attitudinal variables which by and large are missing from the literature.[48] Data from a representative sample of studies are summarized in Table 3.

The table reflects a number of characteristics of demographic research on the paraprofessional. First, there is a wide range of sample sizes on which studies are based. In the data presented, studies are based on samples ranging from 5 people to 10,000. Secondly, many significant types of data are missing. Some studies emphasize race; others concentrate on education. With few exceptions there is little consistency in the types of demographic data collected. Thirdly, there is great divergence in the composition of the variables used. This is particularly true of socio-economic status (SES). Some authors (e.g., Grosser, 1965) use carefully defined SES indices. Others (e.g., Cain and Epstein, 1967) leave it mainly to the reader's imagination.[49] Such wide variation makes it quite difficult to construct a demographic composite of the paraprofessional worker.

A few consistent patterns do emerge from the literature. It is abundantly clear, for example, that most paraprofessional workers are female. Three explanations seem to account for this. First, most of the legislation supporting the paraprofessional movement is directed toward the disadvantaged, and the explicit intent of some of this legislation is to provide employment for public assistance recipients. Both of these circumstances increase the likelihood that more women than men will enter paraprofessional employment. A disproportionate number of households headed by females are found among the poor, and mothers receiving assistance under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program constitute the bulk of welfare recipients who can and want to work.

Secondly, there is evidence that women enter the social service field, at almost all levels, more frequently than men (Katzell, et al., 1971).[50] Finally, the limited data available on paraprofessional drop-outs (e.g., Larson, et al., 1969) suggest that males may be more likely to leave training programs than females. All of these factors combine to create an occupational field in which a majority of the workers are women.[51]

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[48] The reader should be forewarned to avoid the pitfalls of a cultural stereotype of the paraprofessional based on "face-sheet" or demographic data. The technical problems associated with sociological "typing" were described briefly in Chapter 2.

[49] This situation is described in a recent article by Haug and Sussman (1971) on the interpretive problems associated with SES indices.

[50] This same trend is clear in paraprofessional programs in the mental health field (Sobey, 1970).

[51] Editor's note. This trend toward a "female" occupation seems to be moderating somewhat, at least in higher levels of education and employment. Men seem to dominate in top managerial positions and in post-master's education.

Table 3

Basic Demographic Data of Paraprofessionals (Selected Studies)

Source	Setting or Program	Number of Persons	Demographic Variables				
			Age	*Sex*	*Race*	*Educational Level*	*Income (SES)*
Adelson & Kovner (1969)	Social health technician training program (Lower Manhattan)	41	*	Majority female	Majority black	Most less than high school	All low income
Ahearn (1969)	Two large New England Community Action Programs	112	21-50	50 percent female	Mostly black	*	*
Berryman (1968)	Neighborhood Youth Corps programs	75	Avg. 22	78 percent female	*	60 percent high school graduates	*
Birnbaum & Jones (1967)	Social work aides (former clients) in 59 Project Enable programs	*	*	*	*	Most less than high school	Many on welfare
Brecher, et al. (1968)	Anti-poverty program participants in New England	38	22-61	Majority female	Mostly Irish-Italian	Average 10 years	Poor AFDC recipients
Cain & Epstein (1967)	Large metropolitan state hospital in New England (case aides)	25	25-55	100 percent female	*	45 percent had college	Middle class
Denham & Shatz (1969)	Human services agencies (Washington, D.C.)	150	*	*	Black	*	Underprivileged
Gannon (1968)	Harlem Domestic Peace Corps	150	Avg. 22.7	71 percent female	Black	High school graduates	*
Grosser (1965)	Mobilization for Youth program (Manhattan)	40	*	*	35 percent black, 40 percent Puerto Rican	82 percent high school or less	Many raised in slum areas (multidimensional SES index)
Harvey, et al. (1968)	Rehabilitation aides (Contra Costa, Calif.)	69	21-50	*	Most Mexican-Americans	Many 2-4 years college	*

Larson, et al. (1969)	New Careers trainees (dropouts)	102	Avg. 31.5	52 percent male	59 percent non-white	Average 11-12 years	*
Lowenberg (1968)	Community Action and social service programs	38	*	*	95 percent non-white	Less than high school	*
Committee on Effective Utilization of Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff (1968)	Survey of 91 state VR agencies	297	18-65	55 percent female	*	Most high school	*
National Social Welfare Assembly (1966)	Client staff	*	21-72	*	Bilingual	*	Have experienced poverty
Perlmutter & Durham (1965)	Casework service aides	*	16 +	*	*	High school	Suburban background
Shostak (1966)	Community program participants (Philadelphia)	*	*	*	55 percent white, 5 percent Puerto Rican	*	Less than $3,000/year
ORDT (1970)	National survey of SRS program agencies	10,547	Avg. late 30's	84 percent female	*	Majority high school graduates or G.E.D.	Many former public assistance recipients
Staub & Petree (1967)	Rehabilitation aides in out-patient clinic	5	*	*	*	High school	Middle class
Truax & Shapiro (1966)	Counselor aides	5	28-50	80 percent female	*	2 years of high school	*
Wilson, et al., (1969)	New Careers programs in 49 cities	7,000	22-34	80 percent female	74 percent black	48 percent high school or less	82 percent with less than $3,000 a year
Zurcher (1968)	OEO indigenous leaders	18	*	61 percent female	Most black, Mexican, Indian	*	Poor

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*Data not given

It is also clear that the paraprofessional is most likely to be a member of a racial or ethnic minority, not because of an inherent appeal in the program but because paraprofessionalism is an urban movement directed toward the disadvantaged person with limited occupational experience and often with few marketable skills. In the current situation this often means that the person is black.[52] This is not to say that paraprofessionals are exclusively black or that they all belong to minority groups. Some data (e.g., Brecher, et al., 1968; Grosser, 1965; Harvey, et al., 1968; Shostak, 1966) indicate that racial and ethnic groups are differentially represented among paraprofessionals in various parts of the country. This may reflect varying concentrations of specific minorities in the population as well as differences in their access to education, training, and steady employment.

PARAPROFESSIONAL LIFE STYLES AND ORIENTATIONS

Empirical investigations involving measurement of psychological and sociological variables (other than sex, race, and socio-economic status) are few and far between. In the absence of hard data there is a tendency to construct cultural composites of the paraprofessional from demographic data, and then attribute attitudes, values, and life styles based on general sociological knowledge of such cultural groups. We would prefer not to do this. There is too little agreement among sociologists about the psychological correlates of demographic data (e.g., socio-economic status) to permit this to be done with scientific rigor.[53] In the sections that follow we will attempt to describe the mixture of speculation and data that presently exists in the literature. The reader should keep in mind that our efforts at synthesis should be viewed as summaries rather than as stereotypes.

THE CONCEPT OF INDIGENOUSNESS

No discussion of paraprofessional attitudes and orientations could proceed without reviewing the notion of indigenousness. This idea has probably done more to influence the image of the paraprofessional than any other. The term first came into the literature in the work of Reiff and Riessman in 1963 and 1964. Strictly defined, it means "living naturally in a particular region or environment" (Webster's dictionary, 1970). Thus, the term has geographic (region) and possibly cultural (environment) connotations. Initially, the geographic and cultural connotations of the term appear to have been given equal weight. Reiff and Riessman felt that workers should be recruited from, and then deployed in, the communities or neighborhoods from which they originally came. This was seen as a means of improving the probabilities of common cultural and experimental attributes among workers and their clients. Gradually, the cultural connotation of the term became somewhat detached from the geographical connotation and workers were to be recruited on the basis of cultural attributes or personal characteristics closely implying cultural or experiential attributes. As the years passed (1964-1968), writers began to emphasize the cultural implications of indigenousness insofar as they could be inferred from social class and race. Eventually, it came to be used as a means of contrasting paraprofessional similarity (in attitudes and values) with clients and paraprofessional dissimilarity with professionals. Originally intended to bridge the cultural distance between professionals and clients, the concept has been used, when convenient, to emphasize the cultural distance between professionals and paraprofessionals and to maintain that it cannot be closed.

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[52] Editor's note. Another factor is that minority group members (among them, blacks) are attracted to the paraprofessional movement by a desire to change the services delivered. Service programs historically have been less likely to meet the needs of the minority than of the majority.

[53] For more extensive treatment of the methodological problems involved in such inferences, the reader is referred to the citations accompanying the discussion of Harrington's work in Chapter 2.

Perhaps the best recent definition of indigenousness has been put forth by Grosser (1969a). He defines indigenous workers as

> . . . those who reside in the target area, engage in social, economic and political processes similar to those of program participants, and are matched with them on such characteristics as social class, race, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, and mores. (p. 123)

Grosser's definition, reflecting very strongly the early thinking of Reiff, Riessman, Pearl, and Gartner, has been elaborated by Teare (1971), who identifies two major dimensions of indigenousness: cultural affiliation with the client group; and shared problem experiences. Both definitions emphasize the importance of demographic similarities between paraprofessional and client. This notion is the key to understanding the role the indigenous worker has played in the paraprofessional movement.

In advocating the use of the indigenous worker, it was argued that similar antecedents as indicated by biographical history will result in similar attitudes and value orientations.[54] Thus, if one selects workers on the basis of demographic characteristics, one is indirectly selecting on the basis of attitudinal and value characteristics. Given demographic similarities between workers and clients, more fundamental similarities will exist. It is these deeper cultural similarities that are presumed to result in greater client acceptance of services, better communication between agency and client, and a fuller understanding of client needs leading to more effective services.[55] It is easy to see why the concept of indigenousness has played such an important role in at least two of the major motives for using paraprofessionals: increasing the effectiveness of services; and providing helper-therapy experiences. For the latter, similarity of motive between helper and client is basic.

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[54] The converse of this position must also be assumed; different antecedent histories will result in divergent (and possibly incompatible) value and attitude orientations.

[55] It is immediately evident that this sequence implies a complex cause-effect chain of events. Controlled, empirical validation of such a process has not yet taken place. Studies linking indigenousness to service performance are not available. The work of Grosser (1965) is a step in this direction. Also in question, in view of current sociological controversy, is the determinism implied by the emphasis on environmental influences. We do not discount the possibility of such connections being valid. We are simply commenting on the fact that most writers, at least in this field, seem to have already made the leap on the basis of assumed rather than empirically demonstrated relationships between demographic and psychological variables.

Table 4

Attitudes and Life Styles of Paraprofessionals

1. Have a life style which is basically expressive. They derive little security from family or institutional relationships. Consequently, they are not socialized to seek solutions to problems through organizations (Rainwater, 1968).
2. Tend to be fatalistic about an individual's ability to affect his life in any major or significant way (Grosser, 1969b).
3. Approach the job situation with a mixture of motives. Most have self-centered reasons for becoming paraprofessionals. Altruism is not an important consideration (Gannon, 1968).
4. Because of demographic background they can move freely in a community. There is no need to be concerned about validating themselves to clients (Pearl and Riessman, 1965).
5. Tend not to be judgmental and moralistic with respect to behavior such as drinking, illegitimacy, continuous unemployment (Grosser, 1969b).
6. Tend to be quite direct and oriented toward taking quick action. Tend to be impatient with delays and a good deal of verbal behavior (Brager, 1965; Grosser, 1969b).
7. Place more emphasis on external life circumstances than on internal characteristics of people. Consequently, they see problems more as externally caused than the result of internal deficiencies (Riessman, 1965a; Brager, 1965).
8. Likely to be skeptical and suspicious of bureaucratic authority. This comes from both lack of experience with organizations and from past histories of exploitation (Brager, 1965; Gannon, 1968).
9. Have a basic work style which tends to be informal. Place little emphasis on formal constraints like channels of communication and confidential data. Tend more toward congeniality and friendliness than toward objectivity and detachment (Brager, 1965; Grosser, 1969b; Otis, 1965; Pearl and Riessman, 1965).
10. Have an eclectic and pragmatic approach to problem solving. This results in spontaneity and impatience with heavy emphasis on methodology (Riessman, 1965a).
11. Likely to be more comfortable with concrete tasks, problems, and methods. Impatient with abstractions (Pearl and Riessman, 1965).
12. Are impatient with planning activities. Tend also to view plans as promises (Larson, et al., 1969).

LIFE STYLES AND ORIENTATIONS

Descriptions of paraprofessional life styles have been drawn from three major sources. The first is inferences of what such workers might be like from sociological and psychological research on disadvantaged groups in our society. Rainwater's (1968) work is a good example of this. The second is actual contact with paraprofessionals in programs. Although not psychological in orientation, it is a rich source of leads on behavioral attributes of paraprofessionals for future measurement. Much of the work of Riessman falls into this category. The third source is sociological and psychological studies on the paraprofessionals themselves. These involve the use of scales or other systematic observations, e.g., Ahearn (1969), Gannon (1968), and Grosser (1965).

There is enough consistency in the different efforts to warrant an attempt at synthesis. Table 4 contains a listing of the attributes, attitudes, and life styles derived from the sources mentioned.

These are the major attributes of the life style, job style, and general orientation of the paraprofessional worker appearing in the literature, though in setting them forth we have used only a limited number of references. It is easy to see why there is a tendency to stereotype the paraprofessional. There is also a tendency to contrast these attributes with stereotypes of the professional (e.g., formal, detached, process-oriented, abstract, middle-class) and to postulate many sources of inevitable tension and friction.

All of these variables are potentially amenable to research, but so far no systematic attempt has been undertaken on a large scale. The basic assumption is that the demography of disadvantage results in the characterizations listed. More importantly, it is assumed that these attributes are clearly related to effective job performance and good work adjustment. Preliminary empirical findings in the work of Ahearn (1969) and Grosser (1966) indicate the need for more research on the paraprofessional life style and its relationship to past history and subsequent occupational performance.[56]

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[56] These data will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 4

THE USE OF PARAPROFESSIONALS

SUMMARY

Five motives for the use of paraprofessionals have been identified in the literature: solving the problems created by a shortage of skilled SWRS manpower; creating employment opportunities for the unemployed poor; increasing the efficiency of SWRS delivery systems; increasing the effectiveness of SWRS delivery systems; and providing helper-therapy experiences for workers. These motives are rarely reduced to their simplest expression and separated. When they are their incompatibilities become clear, for they offer different benefits to different parties who have a stake in the SWRS system, and they call for different approaches to job construction.

Two job construction approaches are generally used:

- *Job factoring starts with tasks as they are currently performed in various jobs. It takes these tasks, groups them into homogeneous clusters, and creates new jobs from these clusters. In the service fields it is assumed that the less difficult, or lower level, tasks can be assigned to less skillful workers.*
- *Job development focuses initially on needs and problems rather than on existing jobs. Once these needs have been defined and categorized, tasks are designed to meet them. Task assignments pay little heed to traditional boundaries between professional and paraprofessional activities but are determined instead by who can do them best.*

Job factoring seems to be useful in relieving manpower shortages, dealing with unemployment, and achieving some operational efficiencies. Job development holds promise of increasing the effectiveness of service delivery, providing therapeutic work experience, and providing opportunities for worker growth and advancement.

Because the motives for employing paraprofessionals are usually not clear, job factoring and job development are not widely discussed in the SWRS literature. However, there is a good deal of material on methods of task assignment, the most common of which are:

- *Underfilling—Positions are filled by persons who may or may not have the required skills at the time the tasks are assigned to them. One*

simply hopes for the best and provides whatever on-the-job training can be made available.

- *Case Differentiation—The caseload of an agency is reviewed and each case evaluated with respect to problem severity. Severe problems are assigned to fully-trained workers and less severe problems to less-trained workers.*
- *Episode of Service—Clients are grouped on the basis of similarity of need. Teams of staff members are then formed to carry out a series of activities which may or may not cut across these client groups.*
- *Task Differentiation—Tasks are evaluated by the complexity of skills required to perform them. Complex tasks are assigned to professionals and less complex to paraprofessionals.*
- *Client Vulnerability/Worker Autonomy—Assignments are made on the basis of two determinations: the client's susceptibility to harm by a worker, and a worker's ability to function without supervision. Clients thought to be highly vulnerable and cases requiring a high degree of independent judgment are assigned to fully-trained workers.*

A number of writers have specified roles or functions for paraprofessional workers. Generally, two themes run through this literature. The first is the notion of task relief—freeing the professional for duties suited to his training. The second stresses the uniqueness of paraprofessionals and emphasizes autonomy and relatively high discretion in paraprofessional activity.

In Chapter 2 the five motives for using paraprofessionals were described:

- the desire to compensate for the shortage of skilled SWRS manpower, particularly of workers trained at the graduate level;
- the desire to increase employment opportunities for disadvantaged workers and the unemployed poor;
- the desire to develop an efficient division of labor so that manpower with different levels of skill could be assigned appropriate duties;
- the desire to modify organizations so that the resulting service delivery system would be more directly related to the problems of clients and more efficient in meeting their needs; and
- the desire to provide work experience in which workers, by helping clients with problems similar to their own, improve their social functioning and become better prepared for work.[57]

All of these motives are present in the movement but are emphasized to different degrees by the different groups giving it shape and direction. People speaking for the professional organizations (e.g., National Association of Social Workers, American Public Welfare Association, National Rehabilitation Association) emphasize the first and third motives: to meet the shortage of traditionally trained SWRS workers and to evolve a division of labor which would use the skills of professionals more efficiently.[58] The literature on the publicly-funded work preparation programs (with the exception of the Economic Opportunity Act) emphasizes the second motive. Here, the purpose seems mainly to open up the SWRS field, by whatever means, to the marginal worker. Those who advocate the New Careers philosophy emphasize the fourth and fifth motives.[59] Their writings, more than any others, question the relevance of the traditional SWRS service model and argue for the unique contribution that can be made by the indigenous worker. Their quarrel with the division of labor is not on the grounds of efficiency but on the score that the existing system prevents certain roles from being played and thus reduces its effectiveness, and that it denies lower-level entry workers a footing on viable career ladders because of credential barriers.

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[57] Editor's Note. The desire to create new ways for people to prepare for work and new ways for them to advance in work is a particularly strong motive in the New Careers stream of the paraprofessional movement. The credentials system, which controls entry and promotion in professional jobs in the human services by requiring a fixed number of years of schooling or a degree, had come under criticism at about the same time as the paraprofessional movement was taking shape. Opponents of the credentials system were natural allies of the advocates of paraprofessionalism, and their criticism of the credentials system became a dominant theme in the New Careers movement. It is likely that the motive of creating new pathways to work preparation and new systems for promotion and advancement is the single most important motive among paraprofessionals themselves and among New Careers advocates.

This motive is likely to grow in importance because it relates the paraprofessional movement to the needs of a new and apparently growing constituency: the white, middle-class, school drop-outs and counterculturists of the late 1960's and early 1970's. This group's rejection of the credentials system is implicit in their actions; their support of the paraprofessional movement may become explicit as they seek access to jobs and find their way blocked by traditional credential requirements.

[58] Various attempts to formulate such a division of labor are discussed in later sections of this chapter.

[59] Editor's Note. As previously noted, the New Careers philosophy placed as much emphasis on new means of career advancement for workers without traditional schooling and credentials as it did on improving service delivery. The helper-therapy motive was not as important to the broad New Careers constituency as it was to the architects of the New Careers philosophy and professionals directing New Careers programs.

BENEFICIARIES OF THE MOVEMENT

What is important in this study is not that the paraprofessional movement is propelled by several motives, but rather that different motives have led to different actions which resulted in quite different consequences for the number and kind of paraprofessionals hired and used.

Grosser et al. (1969) and Katan (1970) have attempted to separate these motives. When they are separated their incompatibilities become clearer, for their benefits vary in kind and degree for the various parties who have a stake in the SWRS delivery system—the professions, the organizations and agencies, the paraprofessionals, the clients, and the public at large.

In an unpublished manuscript, Katan (1970) examined the content of these motives and tried to determine who would benefit most from their implementation. We have summarized the results of his analysis in Table 5.[60]

The table highlights an observation made earlier that there were three major types of beneficiaries: those who profit most from the first and third motives; those who stand to gain from the second motive; and those benefited by the fourth and fifth.

We should thus find three major constituencies for paraprofessionalism. This, in fact, is the case. The first is composed of the disciplines, the professional associations, and the organizations (e.g., agencies, schools) they are responsible for staffing. These are the constituents for whom the first and third motives will have the most pay-off and therefore the most appeal. Much of their writing, as stated in Chapter 2, has emphasized the manpower shortage and the need to develop formal models of task differentiation designed to free the professional from duties below his skills. Most have emphasized the useful, but subordinate, role the paraprofessional can play.

The second constituency is the public at large. This group, unaware of the technical difficulties but concerned about the increasing tax burden of SWRS systems, is attracted by the second motive. It holds out the promise of a reduction in unemployment and a decrease in the number of people on welfare. Much of the legislation and policy for work preparation programs (e.g., MDTA, WIN, PSC) placed a good deal of emphasis on these themes.

The third major constituency comprises the paraprofessionals themselves and the client groups from which many of them came. Their cause is served by the fourth and fifth motives, which stress the need to make SWRS systems more relevant and effective through client-paraprofessional participation. As typified by the New Careers literature, writings in support of this constituency do not merely

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[60] Katan's original article identified seven major motives. Since some of these were considered to be interrelated, they have been reduced to the five used here.

Table 5

Motives and Beneficiaries

Motives	*Beneficiaries*				
	Professions	*Organizations*	*Paraprofessionals*	*Clients*	*Public*
1. Deal with manpower shortage	XX	XXX		X	
2. Cope with unemployment		X		XX	XXX
3. Increase service efficiency	XX	XXX		X	
4. Increase service effectiveness			XX	XXX	X
5. Provide therapeutic work experience		X	XXX	XX	

XXX = primary benefit
XX = secondary benefit
X = least benefit

stress the need to create entry jobs, but to modify personnel systems so that these entry jobs are the first step in a career. This literature places emphasis on the independent work role of the paraprofessional, valuable in its own right.

When the beneficiaries of paraprofessionalism are identified it becomes clear that there is something in it for everyone. The question that remains is why a movement with a broad base of appeal should be so controversial. There appear to be at least four reasons for this:

- Many technical problems need to be solved before viable models for the differential use of staff can be developed. An illustration is the difficulty of finding an acceptable rationale for the assignment of tasks to workers.
- The various motives are based upon different assumptions about what kinds and how much change in organizational structure, staffing patterns, types of services, curricula, and merit classifications are required.
- Given limited resources, not all objectives can be implemented at the same time. Whenever priorities must be set, some things are done at the expense of others.

- Different motives call for different strategies. Debates on strategy are often thinly veiled confrontations between two or more conflicting motives.

JOB CONSTRUCTION STRATEGIES

Once a commitment to the need for paraprofessionals has been made, the next step is to construct jobs for them to perform. Many of the patterns for using paraprofessionals are derived from two methods of job construction: job factoring and job development.

Job Factoring

When there is a shortage of people to provide needed services or when there is pressure to hire large numbers of unemployed people, methods of job construction that produce more jobs quickly are favored. A typical approach has been to carry out job factoring as described by Fine (1967a) and Teare and McPheeters (1970). Job factoring has been a traditional way of constructing jobs in the industrial sector, and owes its origins in the United States to the concept of scientific management introduced in the early 1900's.

Job factoring starts with an array of tasks as they are currently performed in various jobs. It takes these tasks, separates and classifies them in homogeneous clusters, and creates new jobs from these clusters.[61] In the human service fields it is assumed that less skilled workers can be assigned less difficult, lower-level tasks, which then serve as the base for paraprofessional positions. This method of allocation when looked at from the professional's point of view is called task relief (Denham and Shatz, 1969), because it relieves the professional of tasks for which his higher-level training is not required.

Since the method involves an apportioning of tasks based on skill and difficulty, the resulting jobs, both professional and paraprofessional, are likely to be more or less homogeneous. In addition, there is a built-in status distinction between professional and paraprofessional because paraprofessional jobs are constructed by splitting off the lower-level tasks.

The method has some advantages: jobs can be developed quickly; specific standards of performance can be defined; training times can be shortened appreciably because the jobs are homogeneous; and the traditional areas of expertise cherished by professionals are not threatened.

Job factoring may relieve manpower shortages, deal with unemployment, and achieve a high degree of operational efficiency. It seems to have the advantages traditionally ascribed to specialization, and has been the method most talked about by those who speak from the perspective of the professions and disciplines in the SWRS field.

[61] Homogeneous task clusters are tasks which are similar in the complexity of worker behaviors involved, the performance standards which must be met, and the levels of skill and training required.

It also has disadvantages. Jobs tend to be repetitious and can result in a high incidence of boredom among workers; the paraprofessional positions can become low-status dead-end jobs without opportunities for employee development, and the procedure can aggravate status differences, widening rather than closing the gap between professionals and paraprofessionals. It is these weaknesses that the advocates of the New Careers approach have criticized. As Gartner (1971) has correctly pointed out, without the range of employee supportive services, adequate training, and access to educational credentials, job factoring leaves a great deal to be desired as a long-range strategy.

Perhaps its most fundamental shortcoming is that it is not likely to increase the relevance and effectiveness of services—the fourth motive for employing paraprofessionals described earlier. If client or worker needs are not being met by the existing system, the jobs constructed by factoring are unlikely to correct this deficiency. In fact, the resulting specialization and referral of the client to several workers may actually reduce the likelihood that the needs of the client will be served.

Job Development

An alternative to job factoring is job development. When applied to the SWRS field, job development rests on two basic assumptions described by Fine (1967a):

- jobs come into being in response to either the needs of the public or the problems of the professions;
- since needs are usually broader than the purview of professions responding to them, the match between the needs and coverage should be reviewed periodically.

This method focuses on needs and problems rather than on existing jobs, and, once these needs have been defined and categorized, proceeds to design tasks to meet them. The emphasis in this method is on the work that must be done to meet objectives. Current job classifications—whether professional or paraprofessional—do not control the design and distribution of tasks. After tasks have been identified and obsolete tasks eliminated, both the old and new tasks are grouped into new clusters of activity.

As with job factoring, job development has certain inherent virtues. Its most important asset is its emphasis on the relevance and effectiveness of services. Because it assumes that tasks as they are currently performed may not be meeting present needs, there is more likelihood that new kinds of tasks (involving services not currently being delivered) may emerge. Conversely, if existing activities are no longer necessary, they may be abandoned. In addition, since activities are not initially reviewed within the framework of existing jobs and status hierarchies, the tasks derived by this method are not associated with current boundaries or divisions of labor. If job boundaries need to be expanded or contracted, if services need to be added or dropped, if structural changes need to be made in organizations, job development has the flexibility to do them all.[62]

Yet it has its shortcomings. Many see it as a more complicated procedure than job factoring, more time-consuming and slower to show results. It assumes the participation of a wide range of people, including clients at times, in identifying needs and problems. Candid interactions from such an exchange are difficult to achieve, however, and when attained are not always placid. Finally, since it permits free traffic across job boundaries, it threatens those professionals who wish to preserve traditional distinctions.

Summary

We have related the major motives for using paraprofessionals to two methods of job construction.

Job factoring yields short-range results and can quickly increase the number of jobs. It protects professional boundaries and assumes that present services are relevant and effective. It has had a great appeal for decision makers who view problems from the standpoint of the professions and the existing service delivery systems.

Job development seems to be a more difficult and time-consuming technique. It is more concerned with the alignment of jobs to service needs and available manpower than with the creation of large numbers of new jobs. It ignores traditional job boundaries and, when applied with maximum vigor, can be used to change the very structure of the service-delivery systems. It has had a great appeal for policy makers who view problems from the perspective of the clients and the paraprofessionals.

These methods are rarely referred to by name in the literature because they are seldom recognized as explicit strategies for implementing paraprofessional manpower objectives.[63] Nevertheless, they both call for eventual decisions about how labor will be divided and tasks assigned in SWRS activities.

METHODS OF ASSIGNING JOBS

Any discussion of paraprofessional assignments should proceed within the broader context of how job and task assignments are made to a full range of workers. This section will survey various techniques which have been proposed as useful guidelines.

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[62] Editor's Note. Job development is more likely than job factoring to meet the demands of paraprofessionals and New Careers advocates for opportunities for worker growth and development. To the extent that the needs and problems of workers are considered along with those of clients and organizations, the former method seems more likely to create new pathways to job preparation and advancement.

[63] The exceptions to this statement are the writings of Elston (1967), Ferman (1968), Fine (1967a), Wiley and Fine (1969), Ornati (1969), and Teare and McPheeters (1970).

Underfilling

The device most frequently used is one known as underfilling, which involves filling positions with persons who may or may not have the required skills at the time the tasks are assigned to them. Its use in the social welfare field has been described by Denham and Shatz (1969). In the paraprofessional movement this usually means filling professional positions with paraprofessional workers in those situations where standards are not clear or feedback is remote. More often than not one simply hopes for the best and provides whatever on-the-job training can be made available. Because of the random nature of the procedure, any success that may be obtained is very difficult to duplicate and build into a permanent scheme for using personnel. Because of the absence of clear standards and feedback, the untoward consequences of work performed in underfilled positions tend not to be visible immediately. It is worth mentioning as a technique, however, because of its frequent use.

We shall be discussing material from the social welfare literature alone, since we could find no comparable emphasis on staffing techniques in the rehabilitation field, and shall draw heavily on the work of Barker and Briggs (1966, 1968). Their work, which resulted in an excellent evaluative review of the literature, was done in association with the planning of staffing patterns in a hospital setting.

Case Unit of Differentiation

This rationale, described by Finestone (1964b), focuses on the case or client as the basic unit for making assignments. The caseload of an agency is reviewed and each case is evaluated according to problem severity. Clients with severe problems are assigned to fully-trained workers, usually those who have a master of social work (MSW) degree. Clients with less severe problems are assigned to workers with less training, usually those who have a bachelor's degree. This idea could be extended to allow assignment of clients with the least severe problems to paraprofessionals.

The assumption is that all the work on clients with severe problems requires a professional's skill and knowledge, while none of the tasks to be done for clients whose problems are less severe requires such skills. Since multi-problem clients are frequently involved, such a clear differentiation of skills is usually not feasible. Though it has the advantage of giving the client a single worker to whom he can relate, the method usually ends up by underusing the professional and overusing the paraprofessional.

Episode of Service

Barker and Briggs (1968) advocated a method of work assignments which they called the episode of service. In their method one begins by formulating typologies for groups of clients. Agency goals for each group are then determined and are evaluated according to the range of activities needed to deliver the appropriate services, the ability of the agency staff to provide these activities, and the needs of the clients. Teams of staff members are formed to carry out units of related activities, or episodes of service, that may or may not cut across client groups. The fulfillment of agency goals depends on each team's successfully completing its episode of service.

This approach attempts to achieve more flexibility in assignments by focusing on clusters of activity and by using a team of workers possessing different skills. There is still the now-familiar problem of developing typologies of clients who have similar problems or needs. Furthermore, it may be difficult to distribute task assignments, including team leadership, among various team members.

Task Unit of Differentiation

This method, also described by Finestone, evaluates the complexity of tasks associated with the services rendered by an agency.[64] Complex tasks requiring a high measure of skill or training are assigned to fully-trained professionals, less complex tasks to less-trained workers. This technique is job factoring under a different name.

A prerequisite to employing this method is a fairly precise knowledge of the skills of all staff members—a virtual impossibility in large agencies. In addition, tasks tend to occur in natural sequences in which the range of complexity is sometimes fairly broad. Thus, unless differentiation in assignments and procedures descends to the level of minute specialization, as in industrial production lines, professionals will still be underused at times and paraprofessionals upon occasion will be taxed beyond their skills.

Client Vulnerability/Worker Autonomy

Richan (1962) proposed another approach based on the notions of client vulnerability and worker autonomy. Vulnerability refers to a client's susceptibility to harm by a worker who may not have "built-in social work values, knowledge, and skills." Autonomy refers to a worker's ability to function independently of supervision. Richan blended these two notions into a method of case assignment. Clients judged to be highly vulnerable are assigned to fully-trained professionals, those with low vulnerability to lesser-trained workers. This method could be extended to paraprofessionals in cases of low client vulnerability when specific guides (manuals, checklists) can be used for delivering services.

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[64] In addition to the technical problems of defining tasks in the SWRS field, there is a good deal of uncertainty about the basis of task difficulty or complexity. Briggs, et al. (1970) have begun research on this problem. The reader interested in this area should consult their work.

This method, of course, begs the question of how client vulnerability will be determined. In many other respects it involves case differentiation and has the difficulties we have described in our discussion of that method.

Other Strategies

Anderson and Dockhorn (1965), like Finestone, also focused on task differentiation, but specified more clearly the criteria by which tasks are assigned. They indicated that appropriate tasks for paraprofessionals are those that can be screened by professionals, are within a range of skills that can be taught in a short in-service training program, are repetitive in terms of approach, and lend themselves to a prescription of method before action begins.

Teare and McPheeters (1970), in developing a set of roles and functions for social welfare workers, indicated that tasks can be grouped and work assigned on the basis of the client being served (the case), the objectives of the activities, the skill level of the workers, the task similarities (task differentiation), and the logistics of the work setting. They stated that all of these aspects might have to be considered at one time or another as a basis for staffing assignments. Their recommendations were that principal emphasis be given to the blend of task similarities and objectives. Using combinations of these in various clusters, they defined a range of roles that paraprofessionals might play.

Summary

Techniques for the assignment of work to paraprofessionals have been formulated almost exclusively in the social welfare literature. Little discussion of this topic can be found in the rehabilitation literature. The choice of optimal methods of task assignments is far from clear and is based on heuristic rather than empirical criteria. Highly specific research on task definitions, client risks, task complexity, and worker skills is required before definitive guidelines can be developed.

Most techniques have concentrated on breaking down existing services, tasks, and cases into smaller work units to make work assignments to paraprofessionals on a job factoring or task relief basis.

The literature we have covered by no means tells the full story. The literature in New Careers, for example, puts relatively little emphasis on how to make task assignments. It covers this topic implicitly in discussing roles that paraprofessionals, particularly those who are indigenous, can play. For these writers, what gets done is not easily separated from who does it. Consequently, we have decided to deal with New Careers staffing considerations in those sections describing the nature of paraprofessional attitudes.

THE NATURE OF PARAPROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Much of the early work on the duties and tasks of SWRS paraprofessionals had a cautious and conservative flavor. In the early 1960's the use of the paraprofessional was a new and not widely accepted proposal for mitigating problems posed by expanding services and staff shortages in the field. As the movement gained acceptability the flavor of the writing changed. The scope of the paraprofessional's responsibilities was expanded and published material became more specific about the nature of his duties. But the literature still deals more with the need for such workers than with formulations of their tasks.

In this section we shall summarize the limited material dealing specifically with the use of paraprofessionals, their roles and tasks. We shall also include discussions of autonomy, discretion, and deployment as the material permits.

Patterns of Use in Social Welfare Services

In 1962, the National Association of Social Workers published a monograph entitled *Utilization of Personnel in Social Work* which proposed the use of paraprofessionals as case aides. It argued that the primary purpose of an aide, who should be used only in conjunction with trained staff, was to relieve professionals of responsibilities that did not require their skill. But it cautioned against generalizations of what case aides should do since clients' needs had to be examined individually. Another section of the document advocated that approaches to the use of paraprofessionals should isolate the task as the key variable for formulating jobs, and give less importance to the nature of the clientele and the agency situation.

In 1965, the Division of State Merit Systems (DSMS) and Bureau of Family Services (BFS), HEW, published guidelines for the planning of jobs and careers for auxiliary staff in public welfare. The focus of such jobs was to be on specialized tasks, but these guidelines went beyond the relatively narrow task relief philosophy of the NASW document.

Four functional types were recommended:

- *Administrative Aides*, who would take over tasks that were essentially administrative and clerical but part of the social worker's job.
- *Research and Statistical Assistants*, who would fill administrative assistant positions that required greater responsibility and judgment.
- *Household Helpers and Homemakers*, who would perform tasks involving service to clients in their own homes to facilitate their movements about the community. These would be routine, time-limited tasks performed under the client's direction and the agency's administrative supervision.
- *Neighborhood Workers*, who would use informal contacts in neighborhoods to help individuals and families avail themselves of public welfare services.

These recommendations incorporated the traditional task relief functions for the Administrative Aide and the Research Assistant, but did include two positions whose tasks would be performed outside the agency setting and would be far less subordinated to the activities of professionals.

In their 1964 monograph Reiff and Riessman identified two major roles for paraprofessionals. One role merely extended the influence of the professional worker, reducing the burdens he carried and reflecting agency values, attitudes, and objectives. The second role, which was to become the more visible of the two, conceived of a person who would be an extension of the client and the community, and whose activities and personal characteristics would be inseparable. This person, the indigenous worker, would do what he did because of who he was. His essential value would be as a bridge between the agency and the client group because his indigenousness would give him a unique ability to communicate with both groups.

Reiff and Riessman envisioned a strategy that would be "a created unity between the skilled specialist from the helping professions and trained workers from the groups being helped" (page 2). It was this spirit of the grass roots involvement of people that made the idea compatible with the Economic Opportunity Act and its subsequent amendments. The New Careers philosophy became the guide for the use of manpower in the War on Poverty, which in turn was the vehicle by which client participation, community action, and system change were to take place. Through the influence of the EOA, New Careerists and indigenous workers became closely associated with CAP agencies and other anti-poverty programs. New Careerists became the links between clients and agencies. They served as interpreters of client needs and were asked to develop and deliver new services. As a result, they began to function with some degree of autonomy.

Subsequent patterns of use reflected some of this diversity. In 1965, Otis defined three types of functions for auxiliary personnel:

- *Nonprofessional*–involving the performance of clerical, mechanical, maintenance and generally routine tasks.
- *Subprofessional*–assisting the professional by performing tasks that formerly had been part of the professional's job, including filling out forms, determining whether simple eligibility requirements had been met, and providing simple well-defined services.
- *New Careerist*–involving tasks which had not been performed or had been poorly performed by the professional because of his middle-class or ethnic background.

This classification again reflects the dual stream of paraprofessionalism. Two functions are designed to relieve the professional of the burden of unrelated or simple service responsibilities, the third is obviously in line with the Reiff and Riessman philosophy.[65]

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[65] Subsequent federal mandates requiring the administrative separation of services for payments have resulted in an autonomous class of paraprofessionals, the eligibility technician.

In 1966, Levinson and Schiller also proposed a three-way classification predicated on slightly different criteria:

- *Preprofessionals* were people who expected to begin a professional career in the near future and, in a sense, were serving an apprenticeship.
- *Semiprofessionals* were people who would work as closely with professional staff as the preprofessionals but at work which required fewer skills. The main difference here was one of agency and worker expectations.
- *Subprofessionals* were people least concerned with professional standards whose functions would be to provide the many mechanical, clerical, or maintenance services that agencies need.

However, Otis, and Levinson and Schiller are concerned with making broad distinctions in order to highlight basic conceptual differences rather than setting up a rationale specifying the exact nature of paraprofessional work activity.

Later work in the New Careers literature reflected a concern that role descriptions for indigenous paraprofessionals were not enough. Even though they were permitted to carry out functions for which their backgrounds were ideally suited, further adjustments had to be made in personnel systems. Elston's (1967) work, typifying this approach, called for a basic realignment of staffing patterns. She advocated:

- new kinds of workers (indigenous) carrying out new kinds of services (the job development thrust);
- an examination and restructuring of professional assignments;
- the use of professional-paraprofessional teams rather than a staffing pattern predicated on rigid hierarchical structures;
- a range of supportive services to help new workers adjust to the world of work; and
- greater opportunities and incentives (e.g., education, training) for upward and horizontal mobility.[66]

Larson, et al. (1968) provided a design for expanded New Careerist functions that remains a fair description. They talked about three major functional objectives for paraprofessionals: influencing points of view; therapeutic activities; and service roles.

Under influencing points of view they placed the activities associated with orienting clients and serving as a bridge. Orienting refers to the worker's attempts to increase the client's awareness of issues and problems confronting him in the community, the bridge functions involve a variety of linkage activities. Of central importance was the hope that professionals would accept the worker's interpretation of activities and services that should be carried out by the agency.

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[66] The work of Ferman (1968), Fine (1967a), and Wiley and Fine (1969) published during the same period, emphasized a systems approach to the use of manpower. It reflected an increasing awareness that optimum paraprofessional use required fairly extensive modification in personnel and organizational subsystems. Recent work by Fine and Wiley (1971) has resulted in the development of a "task bank" generated from data in public welfare agencies. This material also highlights the requirements for comprehensive analysis of job functions.

Under therapeutic activities were included the notions of support, helping, and intervention. The supportive role involves listening to clients' problems, accompanying them to job interviews to provide moral support, and generally providing friendship in times of stress. The helping role requires more specific knowledge on the part of the worker in providing advice on such matters as comparative shopping, legal rights, and eligibility for services and financial assistance. The intervention role, the most complex of the paraprofessional therapeutic activities, involves establishing a relationship with a client or his family for the purpose of assisting the professional in counseling. It was felt that the paraprofessional could more easily gain rapport with the client and would be more sensitive to his reactions to counseling.

The service roles included those of expediter, outreach worker, and developer. The expediter performs routine clerical, mechanical, and personal duties when these are part of a team effort. Examples include telephoning community agencies to obtain data about clients, running office machines, or escorting elderly people to appointments (e.g., to see a doctor). Outreach personnel are charged with going out into the community to seek the hard-core or delinquency-prone who are not likely to come to agencies on their own. These workers recruit for employment programs and work with teen gangs on the streets. The developer is primarily concerned with attempting to secure employment for clients. He represents the agency in conversations with firms and organizations needing personnel. In many instances, actual job placement and follow-up are seen to be part of his role.

In 1970, Teare and McPheeters published a monograph outlining roles that workers at different levels in social welfare might play. The monograph, based on a series of symposia, attempted to broaden paraprofessional use even further by proposing activities within 12 roles for different workers:

- *Outreach Worker*—would reach out into the community to find people with problems, encourage them to seek help, and follow up to assure that they continued toward a fulfillment of their needs.
- *Broker*—would help people get needed services by assessing the situation, determining the alternative resources, preparing and counseling the people, contacting the appropriate service, and assuring that clients got to it and were served.
- *Advocate*—would plead or fight for a single client whom the service system would otherwise reject (because of regulations, policies, practices); and plead or fight for changes in laws, rules, regulations, policies, practices, etc., for all clients who would otherwise be rejected.
- *Evaluator*—would gather information, assess client or community problems, weigh alternatives and priorities, and make decisions for action.
- *Teacher*—would teach simple tasks (e.g., how to dress, how to plan a meal), courses in budget or home management, and staff development programs.

- *Behavior Changer*—would work toward changing people's behavior by coaching, counseling, behavior modification, and psychotherapy.
- *Mobilizer*—would work to develop new facilities, resources, and programs, and make them available to persons not being served.
- *Consultant*—would work with other persons or agencies to increase their skills and to help them in solving their clients' social welfare problems.
- *Community Planner*—would participate in the planning of neighborhood groups, agencies, community agents, or governments to develop programs which assured that the human service needs of the community were understood and met to the greatest extent feasible.
- *Care Giver*—would provide services such as supportive counseling, fiscal support, protective services, day care, 24-hour care, to people unable to fully resolve their problems and meet their own needs.
- *Data Manager*—would gather, tabulate, analyze, and synthesize all kinds of data for making decisions and taking action. This would range from gathering simple case data, through preparing statistical reports of program activities, to evaluation and sophisticated research.
- *Administrator*—would perform all of the activities in designing and carrying out a program, such as planning, personnel, budgeting and fiscal operation, supervising, directing and controlling.

The monograph suggested that these be viewed not as rigid roles but as elements from which various jobs might be constructed. The authors presented a set of guidelines for the development of paraprofessional positions based on various mixes of these roles.[67]

Patterns of Use in Rehabilitation Services

As indicated previously, the patterns of paraprofessional use in rehabilitation are much more limited than those in social welfare because of the absence of legislative impetus and a firmer adherence to a "medical model" for defining and delivering services.

Patterns of use in rehabilitation bear the stamp of the task-relief philosophy. The Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff (1968), in a report on the Sixth Institute on Rehabilitation Services, wrote that the rehabilitation aide (or paraprofessional) existed for the specific purpose of assisting the trained counselor to serve his client more effectively. It was their opinion that ample evidence existed to indicate that a counselor in an agency setting often had to perform many routine duties that interfered with his ability to practice the skills in which he was trained. Thus, each agency should begin by delineating and removing from the counselor's job those duties that could be performed by a person with lesser skills. (This, of course, is the job-factoring, task-relief philosophy.)

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[67] As with other proposals produced at this time, the document suffered from a lack of research data on task boundaries, and on levels of complexity, difficulty, etc. It offered examples of tasks that various jobs might contain but, because of these deficiencies, did not attempt to scale the tasks into rigorously-defined job levels.

The authors reflected an awareness of the New Careers movement, however, by identifying another type of worker with a slightly different role. This worker, selected from a culturally deprived group, assisted the counselor in comprehending the dynamics of the group. This, however, emphasized the dysfunctional rather than the cultural aspects of indigenousness by stressing the use of ex-alcoholics and physically disabled workers.

Despite these differences, the overall patterns of use for the two types of paraprofessionals were to be essentially the same. Both were seen to "serve the trained rehabilitation counselor in the performance of his tasks" (Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff, p. 40).

About 1969 the New Careers in Rehabilitation Project, National Rehabilitation Association, published its report summarizing patterns of use as they were viewed at that time.[68] Three roles were described, based on differences in skill, knowledge, and abilities necessary for performance.

The first was that of Rehabilitation Trainee. Under the supervision of a more experienced professional or paraprofessional, the rehabilitation trainee performed non-technical work which directly or indirectly assisted in providing rehabilitation services to disabled individuals. His functions included: individual case-finding and providing information about the agency and its services; assisting clients to receive services from the agency and other community programs; providing direct support to the agency staff and facilitating general internal operations; and identifying and reporting available job opportunities from his contacts with the community.

The second role was that of Rehabilitation Assistant. His tasks also were performed under the direction of a more experienced professional or paraprofessional. In addition to any duties of the Rehabilitation Trainee, he was required to gather information on the client's eligibility for service and assist in making arrangements for additional diagnostic information and services; to present information to the agency staff on clients known to him from his community contacts; and to provide information on the nature and scope of agency services to groups or organizations designated by his immediate superior.

The third role, Rehabilitation Associate, was to be performed only under the direction of professional staff members. This worker engaged in semi-technical work activities which directly or indirectly assisted in providing rehabilitation services to disabled persons. Under specific direction he was to conduct initial intake interviews, secure additional diagnostic information, make field visits to clients' homes, and record his assessment of circumstances and setting. In case conferences with the Rehabilitation Counselor, he was to make recommendations to the total rehabilitation plan based on all available data. He could participate in the staffing of cases and could be made responsible for the organization and maintenance of an occupational and labor market information file, or the accumulation and maintenance of any information useful to the agency. He could supervise the administering of rehabilitation services, assist in the placement of clients, and contact other agencies to identify individuals in need of rehabilitation services. Finally, he could deliver approved presentations to community groups and the news media.

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[68] This date is an estimate. The report is undated.

The document clearly stated that all three roles were:

> totally dependent upon rehabilitation functions that can be classified as traditional. While New Careers positions may add new dimensions and functions to the rehabilitation process, they certainly cannot be in conflict with it but must be an extension of the process and, even more important, an effective expression of it. (p. 18)

With respect to the use of indigenous personnel, the report said:

> Such personnel (indigenous) are used most effectively when their needed knowledge or expertise is expeditiously incorporated into the larger system of knowledge and practice. The authors strongly support the use of indigenous specialists until such time as this knowledge can be generally known, fully appreciated, and appropriately applied as an integral part of the larger rehabilitation process and related knowledge system, at which time other needed indigenous specialists should be sought and used. (p. 19)

The position reflected in this document has not been without some opposition. Peckham (1969), writing of his experience with indigenous paraprofessionals working with groups of clients in what he called "cluster servicing," stated that the rehabilitation paraprofessional should not be asked to perform odd jobs but rather should be the principal communicant at referral and throughout treatment. While his work should be reviewed, guided, and supervised by a counselor, the paraprofessional is still the one person most uniquely qualified to transact rehabilitation services with the inner-city client. He should function outside the agency, gathering clusters of clients in the neighborhood and working with each cluster throughout the entire rehabilitation process.

Newman in 1970 advocated a three-level team which he called a vertical generalist team. The team would consist of: a rehabilitation counselor in charge of all interviewing and decisions regarding counseling; a rehabilitation case manager responsible for information gathering and scheduling; and a rehabilitation aide, or paraprofessional, to perform any functions assigned by the case manager and such other duties as his abilities, education, experience, and interest enable him to undertake. The paraprofessional might specialize in certain areas such as outreach, follow-up, or family services, or might be used in providing a broad range of services to enrich his experience. He could be especially valuable in helping the vocational rehabilitation agency to assume the advocacy roles.

This model, like the others, begins to reflect some limited diversity with respect to the paraprofessional's role in rehabilitation. There is still a strong tendency, however, to see the paraprofessional as clearly subordinate to the fully-trained rehabilitation counselor.

Examples of Paraprofessional Activities

Specific examples are helpful in characterizing different patterns of use. In presenting a range of examples drawn from the SWRS literature, we shall follow a grouping proposed by Grosser (1969a). He suggested four major clusters of activities:

- *Direct Service Activities*, where the worker performs with some autonomy and is not under the close direction of a professional. These activities are usually fairly well defined.
- *Ancillary Activities*, subordinated to the provision of services by the professional and usually under his supervision; if not, they are for purposes specified by the service process and are related to his activities.
- *Bridge Activities*, involving communication and linkage between the agency and clients/community.
- *Mission Non-Connected Activities*, not immediately tied to the provision of services by the professional.

These clusters, which can also be related to the roles defined by Teare and McPheeters, are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Examples of Paraprofessional Activities

Direct Service

Stays with, looks after, and arranges suitable activities for, children, the aged, or ill (Division of State Merit Systems, HEW, 1965).

Prepares meals, makes necessary household purchases, and maintains the household (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Feeds and dresses children, and assists them with care for personal needs (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Cares for ailing mother and children until mother recovers (Robinson, W. H., 1967).

Teaches clients how to keep houses neat and how to prepare balanced meals (Robinson, W. H., 1967).

Offers companionship and psychological support to client (Brager, 1965).

Provides transportation to clients for appointments and services (Brager, 1965).

Escorts newcomers and elderly in community to service appointments (Elston, 1967).

Table 6 (continued)

Serves as an interpreter or communicator for the client to the counselor (Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff, 1968).

Ancillary

Verifies selected eligibility information in all programs by checking facts given by the direct service worker (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Observes and defines clients' housing conditions on specific request, and submits reports on observations (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Guides, escorts, and transports children on educational and recreational trips to museums, parks, and exhibits as planned by the direct service worker (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Implements part of treatment program under appropriate supervision (Adelson and Kovner, 1969).

Conducts preliminary interviews with clients (Specht, Hawkins, and McGee, 1968).

Refers clients to appropriate personnel in own agency or other agencies (Specht, Hawkins, and McGee, 1968).

Interviews prospective foster home patients (Department of Medicine and Surgery, V.A., 1965).

Follows up contacts with clients to determine if they are receiving services (Gould et al., 1969).

Counsels clients on available services (Gould, et al., 1969).

Administers selected psychological tests (Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff, 1968).

Makes routine follow-up contacts with client placed in training or employment (Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff, 1968).

Assists the counselor in group counseling (Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff, 1968).

Visits clients' homes and evaluates the life circumstances with regard to their positive and negative effects on rehabilitation (New Careers in Rehabilitation Project, c. 1969)

Bridge

Initiates, renews, and maintains open channels of communication between the agency and neighborhood residents (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Provides staff members with information regarding the needs, resources, and problems of the neighborhood (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Supplies needed information to neighborhood residents regarding the services and resources of the welfare office (New Careers in Rehabilitation Project, c. 1969).

Guides and assists neighborhood residents to utilize the services of the welfare office and other appropriate community agencies (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Table 6 (continued)

Interprets agency programs to clients (Birnbaum and Jones, 1967).

Assists in making community assessments and determining problems of clients (Birnbaum and Jones, 1967).

Assists in developing block clubs and tenant councils (Birnbaum and Jones, 1967).

Interprets neighborhood concerns and needs to civic and political groups (Birnbaum and Jones, 1967).

Helps to mobilize neighborhood resources (Gannon, 1968).

Works with community groups to identify major neighborhood problems (National Social Welfare Assembly, 1966).

Recruits parents in the community for the family life education program (Wood, 1966).

Mission Non-Connected

Maintains appointment schedules for the direct service worker (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Enters information and maintains housing resources and job opportunity files (DSMS, HEW 1965).

Prepares and expedites agency forms as directed by the direct service worker (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Keeps face sheets current and enters factual data in case files (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Provides forms for use by clients, and assists clients in completing required forms and securing necessary documents (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Gathers data from appropriate sources for use in agency reports, surveys, and plans (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Organizes and presents data in an understandable and meaningful manner (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Performs preliminary review and compilation of statistical data gathered for state and federal reports (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Performs preliminary preparation of instructions for data collection and processing for reports and special studies (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Codes and performs preliminary processing on prescribed data collected in open-end questions on special study questionnaires and schedules (DSMS, HEW, 1965).

Helps secure appliances (glasses, braces, shoes, hearing aids, etc.) (Heyman, 1961).

Finds nursing home vacancies (Heyman, 1961).

Gathers information from medical chart (Heyman, 1961).

Files housing complaints (Brager, 1965).

Organizes agency social events (Brager, 1965).

Composes articles on community care for the patient newspaper (Department of Medicine and Surgery, V.A., 1965).

Keeps track of correspondence (Gould et al., 1969).

THE TWO THEMES OF THE MOVEMENT

In this chapter we have reviewed the literature on the use of SWRS paraprofessionals. Much of the writing has been in the literature of social welfare, reflecting the impetus given to this by legislation.

The many patterns proposed for the use of the paraprofessional are drawn together by two themes. The first is the notion of task relief—freeing the professional from duties not suited to his training. This is the older theme historically, and reflects the early concern with manpower shortages and the convenience of job factoring as a job construction technique. It emphasizes a high degree of prescription and close supervision by professionals. The second theme, which emerged later, reflects the influence of the New Careers philosophy. Recognizing the uniqueness of paraprofessionals and using job development as its method of job construction, it emphasizes autonomy and relatively high discretion in paraprofessional activity. It relates most closely to the need to make services more relevant and effective.

When it began, paraprofessionalism was viewed in the professionally-centered literature as a stop-gap measure, a necessary but temporary expedient. The emphasis was on task relief. With the advent of the anti-poverty legislation and its marriage to the New Careers philosophy, the movement changed. It became a vehicle, sometimes unwittingly, giving clients and their representatives greater voice in determining the kinds of services offered. Paraprofessionalism has now matured. There is an increasing recognition that personnel systems need to be modified to provide real career opportunities for paraprofessional workers. In its maturity the movement seems to be developing the ability to accommodate the divergent themes of its youth.

In the future paraprofessionals will probably be less dependent on soft-money programs and agencies for work opportunities. Cutbacks in these programs and increased expenditures in PSC-related programs should result in the greater use of paraprofessionals by the hard-money agencies.

The client-centered thrust of paraprofessionalism remains. It has been tempered by the difficulties of the early years, but, with paraprofessional autonomy, will probably be channeled into the creation of formal paraprofessional organizations (such as the National Association of Human Services Technologies, the National Organization of Human Services, and unions). The impact of this trend on patterns of employment remains to be seen.

CHAPTER 5

PARAPROFESSIONAL ASSIMILATION

SUMMARY

Recruitment of paraprofessionals refers to the techniques designed to identify, reach and motivate groups of people to enter paraprofessional employment. Logically, there should be a relationship between the motives for employing SWRS paraprofessionals and the techniques used to recruit them. Little evidence of such a relationship can be found in the literature. A number of recruiting methods have been used. These have ranged from formal sources, such as local employment agencies, to informal ones, such as neighborhood storekeepers. Personal contacts through professionals, other paraprofessionals, and people in the community have typically been the most frequent and successful sources of referral. Posters, circulars, and newsletters have been found useful when placed in locations frequented by prospective employees. Mass media, e.g., television and radio, have been regarded as the poorest means. Major recruitment problems, such as pre-screening of employees, a poor flow of applicants, or a lack of male applicants, can occur as a result of unsystematic recruiting practices.

The literature mentions a number of desirable characteristics to be sought in the selection of paraprofessionals. They are as varied as the jobs to be staffed. But some are regarded as basic, such as literacy, absence of severe personal handicaps affecting job performance, understanding of and ability to communicate with disadvantaged people, and knowledge of and acceptance by the community.

Several techniques for selection have been discussed. Current tests that for the most part measure aptitude, achievement, intelligence, and some personality traits have been found to be of minimal value. Interviews are usually unreliable. However, crude measures of verbal ability, gregariousness, and physical appearance can be obtained. Evaluation of application blanks and work samples are promising means. In general, there has been little research on the selection of paraprofessionals. The development of behavioral criteria to measure effectiveness of paraprofessional job performance and of methods to assess this effectiveness has typically been overlooked.

The specific nature of a training program will depend upon the characteristics of the people hired and the nature of the jobs they will be called upon to perform. Prior to the implementation of the program, needs, objectives, and job descriptions should be clearly specified. The training of paraprofessionals has

usually included orientation, core and in-service training. Orientation has usually focused on developing a trainee's understanding of the work situation. Core training has usually designated the development of basic functional skills needed to perform a job. In-service training, sometimes called on-the-job training, has occasionally been seen as an extension of core training and occasionally as training in the specific content requirements of a job. These requirements include unique agency procedures and those skills most easily learned at the work station.

Most writers seem to agree that professionals should be prepared to work with paraprofessionals in personal and work relationships. Little has been written about the training of people responsible for instructing paraprofessionals. At the minimum this should include discussion of the orientation and perspective of an entering paraprofessional, as well as his language and cognitive skills. Role-playing and "buzz" sessions have been found useful by many programs since they involve group activities and active rather than passive participation of the paraprofessional. Experience-based discussions, coupled with short, simple, relevant reading materials and practical, brief writing assignments, have worked well. A major problem in the training of the paraprofessional is to instruct him without destroying the uniqueness that makes him an asset to the agency.

The employment, assignment, and use of personnel is a sequential process with distinct steps. Among these is assimilation, the process by which employers and prospective employees find one another and begin exchanging information, making choices, and developing expectations about occupational activities.

The process can be viewed from two perspectives–the employer's and the employee's. Traditionally, personnel literature uses the first and speaks, for example, of "recruitment," conveying only the idea that an employer is looking for prospective workers. Obviously people are also looking for jobs. The activity succeeds best when the two parties, the prospective employer and the person engaged in a job search, find mutual satisfactions. The same is true for selection. It is used mainly to connote the choosing of a worker by an organization. However, organizations are also chosen by workers and any system that does not take this into account is remiss. In the review and discussion that follow, both perspectives will be recognized whenever possible. It should be remembered, however, that the literature on the paraprofessional worker, like the larger personnel administration literature of which it is a part, is written from an organization perspective.

In prior chapters we have described the paraprofessional and the nature of his duties and tasks. This chapter covers in chronological order the steps that precede his actual task performance on the job: recruitment and job search; the selection process; orientation and training; and deployment.

RECRUITMENT

The five major motives for the use of SWRS paraprofessionals were related to job construction approaches and task assignment in Chapter 4, and a limited number of patterns were seen to emerge. One might expect a similar association between employment motives and those techniques designed to identify, reach, and motivate groups of people to enter paraprofessional employment. For example, if the objective is to alleviate chronic unemployment, the people to reach would be those individuals who have been unable or unwilling to seek and find employment, that is, the hard-core unemployed.[69] By the same token, if there is concern about providing helper-therapy work experiences, the search would be for persons who are to some degree physically or psychologically disabled. If there is concern about a manpower shortage and a desire to provide task relief to professionals through job factoring, one would look to a population with work skills who can be trained quickly and absorbed into a system overburdened by demands. If the motive is to make services more responsive to client needs, the people to do it would be individuals who can represent clients, communicate with them about their needs, and articulate and plan the changes that should be made.

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[69] The reader should be aware that many myths persist about the nature of this apparently homogeneous population. We have talked in previous chapters about the dangers of stereotyping this group. W. J. Smith (1970) has edited an excellent monograph on the hard-core worker. Since many topics in that document are relevant to the present discussion, we recommend it to the reader.

Each motive seems to suggest seeking out a particular kind of worker. If the kinds of workers to be sought are different for each motive, one might expect to find recruitment techniques tailored to attract specific groups. Little attention is given to recruitment techniques in the literature, however, and there is no substantial evidence that different techniques have been designed to attract different kinds of workers.

Most of the literature seems concerned with paraprofessional work activities and roles rather than with techniques for reaching out to prospective workers and motivating them to seek employment. The situation in the SWRS field seems very similar to that described by Albee (1963) in the mental health field. There is little conscious, systematic effort to create a favorable image of the paraprofessional and to inform people of employment opportunities.

Major Recruiting Techniques

There are a limited number of ways by which information about job opportunities can be communicated to a group of prospective workers. Paraprofessionals are commonly sought from residential areas surrounding the hiring agency or convenient to it. Job opportunities are most likely to be communicated through:

- local employment agencies;
- presently-employed paraprofessionals;
- professional workers from a given agency;
- advertisements in the news media (e.g., radio, TV, newspapers);
- posters, leaflets, circulars, and newsletters;
- group meetings of prospective applicants;
- talks and speeches to community groups;
- visits to schools and institutions of various kinds;
- people in community businesses (e.g., bartenders, storekeepers, beauticians, barbers);
- neighborhood and community leaders (e.g., clergymen, school officials);
- committees of neighborhood residents set up for this purpose.

With few exceptions, writers have not discussed in any detail the advantages and disadvantages of these channels in recruiting the paraprofessional worker. Sobey (1970), in her comprehensive treatment of paraprofessionals in mental health, devoted only a short section to this topic. She found that although more than three-fourths of 185 mental health projects surveyed used from two to seven of these methods in recruiting paid workers, the breakdown into paid versus volunteer paraprofessional categories revealed the following differential use:

> for paid paraprofessionals, recommendations by project professionals or paraprofessionals were considered the most successful recruitment mechanism;

for volunteers, talks to community volunteer and other groups were by far the most frequently used and the most successful.[70]

Both Sobey (1970) and Martin (1969) pointed out that the mass media seem to be the poorest technique for recruitment.[71] Radio and television spot announcements during prime time reach many listeners but are expensive. Free public service announcements are made at times when the fewest people listen. In either case, it is difficult for listeners to remember street addresses, telephone numbers, and other information seen or heard briefly during announcements. Using newspaper ads presumes that the people sought read the newspaper. Local or neighborhood newspapers seem to be more effective than wider-circulation dailies.

Posters, circulars, and newsletters can be used much more selectively than the mass media. Martin (1969) pointed out that these have been used with success in places where prospective employees congregate (e.g., barbershops, grocery stores, pool halls, laundromats, beauty parlors). Although a good deal of effort may be involved in preparing these items, Schmais (1967) pointed out that they

- are more likely to be seen and to attract a wide range of candidates;
- assure the community that recruiting and hiring of staff are being conducted openly;
- inform the community about the nature of the agency's program and what is being planned.

The major vehicle for transmitting job information is the spoken word (Otis, 1965), usually through informal contacts. Sobey (1970) confirmed the frequent use of personal contacts, indicating that recommendations from both professionals and paraprofessionals were a significant means of recruiting workers in the projects she reviewed. In the various projects surveyed by Martin (1969), the most frequent single method (about 46 per cent of the time) was referral by another person, quite often a friend or relative. Grosser (1969b) reported that paraprofessionals associated with MDTA projects were most often recruited on an ad hoc basis through community informants (e.g., clergymen, school officials, political leaders). Riessman (1965a) described the same method when he talked about a heavy reliance on the use of internal caretakers,[72] referring to people in the community who have a great deal of informal and unstructured contact with prospective workers. These include bartenders, taxi drivers, barbers, hairdressers, and storekeepers.

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[70] Sobey's questionnaire was geared to locating efforts to recruit special new groups of paraprofessional personnel previously under-utilized in the mental health field—for example, housewives, college students, and retired people. Her major finding was that these groups and indigenous community personnel were successfully recruited, beyond the expectations of the projects which set out to recruit on such a large scale those never before considered eligible for work in the human services field.

[71] Martin's (1969) study of recruitment and community penetration is one of the best we have found. Although we will cite extensively from it, the reader would be well advised to consult it.

[72] This term was coined by Gans (1962) in his book, The Urban Villagers.

Major Problems with Recruitment

Pre-Screening. When informal person-to-person recruiting techniques are used, pre-screening may take place.[73] It is important to remember that this pre-screening may be unrelated to potential job performance and, in many instances, may actually work at cross purposes with agency employment objectives.

It occurs most often when the worker qualities and attributes being sought are not clearly specified by the agency. The lack of specificity of worker attributes sought has been described by Grosser (1969a, 1969b); Martin (1969); Otis (1965); Riessman (1965a); and Willcox (1970). The recruiter is left to his own devices to determine desirable applicant qualities and to inform those candidates who, in his judgment, fill the bill. Martin (1969) pointed out that most of the agencies he surveyed had little demographic information about the target groups they were serving and screening, and did not carefully specify the types of workers they were trying to recruit. One agency found that one-third of its trainees were from middle-class areas although its objective was to recruit the hard-core unemployed. It is easy to imagine that, even with specifically stated employment objectives (and these are rare), agencies can miss the target if its recruitment specifications are not clear.

Unintentional agency pre-screening with intentional worker pre-screening can also occur. Little mention is made of this in the literature, but Otis (1965) indicates that reluctance to apply and compete for job openings may be a considerable problem with disadvantaged workers who have a history of job failure. These people may not respond to recruiting appeals because they do not think they are qualified.

The image of an agency can cause pre-screening by the applicant. Most of the agencies surveyed by Martin (1969) made no effort to promote a positive image to the community, and had no knowledge of how the agency was perceived by community residents. Martin thought that image-making was important. An image of an agency as militant might result in a high incidence of activist-oriented applicants. It might also deter moderate people from coming to the agency. Martin also found that the name of the agency or program had an important influence on recruitment. Labels containing the terms "poverty" or "poverty program" had strong negative connotations for many applicants.

Control of Worker Flow. Several writers pointed out that the use of an external agent (either a network of informants or a recruiting agency) could result in a loss of control over the number and flow of applicants. Schmais (1967), for example, indicated that posters and leaflets left in circulation could continue the flow of applicants after the positions had been filled. Referring agencies may refer applicants in numbers far greater than the employing agency can absorb, leading to problems for the agency and frustrations for those applicants who cannot be employed. Furthermore, workers may be referred long before a training or orientation program begins. A lag between referral and selection can discourage all but the most highly motivated applicants.

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[73] By pre-screening we are referring to the intentional or unintentional inclusion or exclusion of applicants by informing some people of job opportunities and not informing others. It is premature in that it is not a part of a systematic screening and selection process carried out by an agency.

Recruitment of Males. We have noted in Chapter 3 that the majority of paraprofessional workers are women. Difficulties in recruiting men have been mentioned specifically in the literature (Adelson and Kovner, 1969). One problem appears to be the low wages associated with many entry-level positions. Another may be the reluctance of some men to work in an agency in which the majority of workers are women. A prospective male applicant soon learns that he will probably have a female supervisor. All of this contributes to his perception of a female occupation. It has been suggested that the use of male recruiters and supervisors may help reverse this (Office of State Merit Systems, HEW, 1968).

APPRAISAL AND SELECTION

The paraprofessional movement contains several contradictions. Some advocates hope to increase the effectiveness and relevance of services by hiring workers with values and attitudes different from those traditionally used to deliver services. Others hope to increase the range and effectiveness of services by hiring workers who, by virtue of similar attitudes and values, can serve as an extension of the professional and free her for the kind of work for which she was trained. Still others hope to reduce chronic unemployment by absorbing individuals with marginal work skills for whom the employment situation is unfamiliar and somewhat formidable.

Managing the different worker characteristics and selection strategies implied in each would challenge the most competent personnel administrator and tax the most rigorous scientific tools.

This section will cover what has been written about the problems these diverse motives introduce into the selection process. It will discuss the range of characteristics and attributes that administrators and researchers have reported as being important to paraprofessional performance and upon which appraisals and selections have been based. The methods used to assess these attributes in applicants will be evaluated on the basis of both inherent characteristics and the limited data from research on SWRS paraprofessionals.

Selection Variables for Paraprofessionals

Although few agencies specify the qualities they seek in paraprofessionals, particularly at the recruiting stage, the literature is helpful in identifying attributes that writers think are desirable. These can be grouped into three major categories: demographic variables; non-cognitive, or affective, variables; and cognitive variables.

Demographic variables are the characteristics referred to in the earlier chapters: age, race, sex, level of education, and some socio-economic and cultural information. Discussions of demographic variables dominate the literature on selection.

The non-cognitive, or affective, variables are those that relate to temperament, personal style, attitudes, and values. These are the dimensions of behavior traditionally characterized as personality variables. They are perceived by many writers as critical to the performance of tasks involving interpersonal relationships with clients.

The cognitive variables refer to intellectual abilities and skills rather than interpersonal behavior. Those mentioned most frequently are intelligence, basic reading and writing skills, and verbal communication ability. This last attribute is important in an occupation that depends very heavily on the spoken word.

The groupings used here are based primarily on psychometric approaches to work performance. Various other groupings have also been proposed.

The Office of State Merit Systems, HEW (1968b, pp. 6-8) has suggested four key attributes of paraprofessional workers which seem to cut across many job functions and position classifications:

- *An understanding of disadvantaged persons and communities.* Adequate understanding of the kind of persons and community to be served is regarded as essential. The concern is not with mere exposure to poverty but with genuine understanding of the special problems of living in poverty and of poor peoples' methods of adaptation to their circumstances. Typically, this is gained from living or working in a poverty area or from other work with the disadvantaged, such as at a Job Corps Center. Familiarity with poverty can be fairly readily determined by such indices as being on welfare rolls, family income level, place of residence, and by self-reports on personal and family experience and on job and volunteer activities. However, this experience does not of itself ensure either an interest in helping other people or a depth of understanding. These must be explored through interviews and through reports of others who know the applicant well.
- *Ability to communicate with the persons to be served, to win their confidence, to help them, and above all, to influence them.* Genuine respect for, and commitment to, the persons to be served are heavily involved in this skill, though they are not sufficient in themselves to ensure the required leadership ability. Moreover, such sensitivity and regard are not uniformly expressed from person to person; in one case a gentle manner, in another a more forthright, even tough, approach will reflect concern and consideration. The critical factor is the ability to influence and guide the individuals served in a way that will accomplish program objectives. This skill is most clearly seen in a "picture" of the

individual's interactions with other persons in his usual environment. Such information, of course, is best obtained from the reports of his peers and others in the community. It is especially relevant to the relationships and functions of the job. For example, the ability to lead and persuade others in activities which are generally socially disapproved may be a skill transferable to some human services support positions. Reports by social caseworkers on applicants in families on welfare (such reports to be made only with the applicant's permission) can be valuable in bringing occupational potential to light.

- *Adaptability, dependability and perseverance.* For individuals being hired in a merit career position, as contrasted with placement in a rehabilitation training project, reasonable ability to adapt and to develop responsible work habits is to be expected. This is doubly important for those human services support positions which entail assistance to others in establishing such personal discipline. Some assessment of an applicant's adaptability and responsibility can be made through self-report of activities on an application form or in an interview. Reports of others who have had the opportunity to observe the individual in paid or volunteer work, or in home responsibilities, are essential. Conventional employment and academic criteria are not necessarily pertinent, and arrest records (and even some types of convictions) should not be automatically disqualifying.
- *Ability to learn the technical aspects of the job, and potential for advancement with training.* This requirement varies greatly with the nature and level of the particular human services support position. Although technical skills without the essential human relations skills may well be worthless, most human services support functions require more than rapport with clients to succeed in accomplishing program objectives.

For jobs with the least complex technical requirements only an elementary level of reading and writing may be required. In some cases, such as preprofessional jobs in the Employment Service program, minimal literacy while necessary is not of primary importance. For certain other support positions, the ability to handle more complex written material, such as preparing simple reports and comprehending agency releases, may be needed. The pertinent level of ability to follow oral and written instructions may be assessed rather informally through the application materials and interview, or more carefully through oral directions and literacy tests, as appropriate. For many of the support classes these methods of assessment are most appropriately used only as a basis for qualifying. But whatever the method, even if it is nothing more than the applicant's ability to complete a simple application card on his own, it must be administered and evaluated on a consistent, standardized basis for all applicants.

For specific job-related technical skills and knowledge, evidence from instructors and supervisors about the applicant's performance in pertinent training and about his paid or volunteer experience is particularly desirable. Especially for some of the higher level support classes, performance, oral, or practical written tests covering required technical areas can be useful. Written tests which emphasize academic achievement are not appropriate.

The interview panel or selection board should give some attention to the applicant's potential to advance, with training, up the career ladder envisaged for the type of work. For this purpose, indices from past behavior must focus on evidences of growth more than on present level of skill or achievement. To the extent that advancement necessitates mastery of relatively formal training on or off the job, pertinent oral, performance, and written tests can be useful assessment devices. Motivation, not just for advancement but for undertaking the responsibilities that lead to advancement, is perhaps as critical as the ability to advance. In this connection, evidence of previous efforts in seeking employment, training, and other avenues for self-improvement would seem particularly pertinent.

As the listing indicates, a heavy emphasis is placed on the affective qualities described earlier.

The Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff (1968), basing its recommendations on a survey of 91 state VR agencies, suggested six qualifications which it felt were important for any of the rehabilitation aide job categories:

- *A demonstrated ability in interpersonal relations.* An aide must have a deep, warm, personal feeling for people and their problems, and be able to empathize with the individuals with whom he is working; otherwise he cannot pass on to the agency the problems and needs of the individual or the community. This is probably the most important criterion in selecting aides.
- *A relatively good knowledge of the community.* Before an aide can understand the needs of the community he must have a good knowledge of its attitudes and values, particularly if he is serving as the link between the community and the agency.
- *Acceptance by the community.* This is one of the key reasons for the employment of the indigenous aide. By having acceptance within the community the aide can help the agency to further the rehabilitation process for groups in the community.
- *Sufficient formal training to have demonstrated a good ability to learn.* The formal training previously received by the aide should be sufficient to gain a basic understanding of human behavior. In addition, the aide will be required to complete certain records and reports established by the agency.

- *An adequate amount of time free from other responsibilities.* When working with people, demands will be such that a job cannot always be completed in an eight-to-five work schedule. Employed aides must have enough time to meet these demands.
- *Available means of getting about the community and/or work area.* Since an indigenous aide must work in the community he must have the means to be fairly mobile.

This list bears some basic similarities with the Merit System's listing. It emphasizes the affective and interpersonal skills and the indigenousness of the paraprofessional. The requirements of learning ability and mobility could turn out to be problems for disadvantaged workers with poor employment histories and few resources at their disposal.

Schmais (1967) added some variables worth considering and strongly urged that two conditions always be met: (1) some degree of literacy but without adherence to rigid educational standards; and (2) the absence of personal handicaps (physical or emotional) which would impair the individual's ability to do his job.[74] His eight variables were:

- *Sex*—Some jobs will be more suitable for men. However, given the difficulty of recruiting them, programs should anticipate the probability that most positions will be filled by women.
- *Age*—Generally, it is not necessary to match age levels of workers and clients, except perhaps where outreach services are being provided to youth.
- *Education*—Since many paraprofessional jobs require the filling out of forms and records, aides should be able to read and write. If education is a criterion, however, it should be in keeping with the minimum requirements of the job.
- *Health*—In general, health should not be used as a selection variable. When it is considered, a physical examination should be given.
- *Income Level*—If one of the objectives of the agency is to hire poor people, then levels of income should be considered. Agencies will have to decide on an individual basis how exclusively they wish to pursue this criterion.
- *Prior Community Experience*—This is a definite asset but it should not be viewed as an absolute necessity.
- *Law Violations*—Previous violations should not be used as a barrier unless they are serious enough to raise severe doubts about the candidate.
- *Residency*—Location of residence should not be used as a qualifying factor unless the agency program is specifically set up to hire community residents. Hiring community residents, however, may have

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[74] This second condition would cause some problems in implementing the helper-therapy principle or in recruiting physically disabled workers under Vocational Rehabilitation legislation.

> certain real advantages: knowledge of the agency and its programs; awareness of community problems; visible evidence of the agency's commitment to the community; and minimum transportation problems for the workers.

Schmais' comments are sound and represent a reasonable appeal to balanced criteria. They raise two questions, however: which variables should be used, and what patterns of variables or degree of ability should be established as cut-off points. At present there are few satisfactory answers to either of these questions. A wide array of selection criteria are being used to screen and select paraprofessional workers. Table 7 lists some of these, drawn from a range of studies that have explicitly discussed or dealt with the selection of paraprofessionals. An inspection of the table reveals several interesting findings. The types of desirable attributes vary widely from study to study. This could be expected from the diversity of motives that underlie the movement and of types of positions being filled. But there is a disturbing consistency in the expectation of exceptional individual attributes. If a composite of the desired worker is constructed from statements of qualifications in the table, the paraprofessional is empathetic, relates well to people, has a high participation in neighborhood events, can communicate with people from different walks of life, possesses initiative, aggressiveness and perseverance, and demonstrates leadership traits and the ability to organize. He is honest, reliable, stable, dependable, and has a high self-worth and a strong personality. In the cognitive area, he shows a good potential for growth and advancement, has verbal ability, and is intelligent. Physically, he is in sound health. In addition to all these attributes, it is hoped that he would be a member of an ethnic minority, be accepted by the community, come from a fairly stable home, and possess an understanding of disadvantaged persons.

It is hard to reconcile this image with motives that point to disadvantaged workers, welfare recipients, and disabled individuals as the labor pool from which paraprofessionals are to be drawn. Yet it is not surprising if one remembers that the literature on selection criteria reflects most strongly the motives to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services and alleviate manpower shortages, and is less concerned with solving unemployment or providing helper-therapy experiences for workers.

This history of selection, based on measures of individual differences, has been to emphasize high performance. Given this legacy, cut-off points have a way of becoming floors for exclusion rather than ceilings for inclusion. In addition, the various programs using paraprofessional workers have been in the limelight and have depended upon funds that were vulnerable at the national as well as local level. Policy makers understandably wanted to achieve success quickly.

These pressures can build an almost irresistible temptation to engage in "cream skimming" (selecting people with the highest qualifications) when hiring paraprofessional staff. This is not a new phenomenon; private sector employers have been doing it for decades. It does seem a difficult practice to justify at the policy level, given the objectives of paraprofessionalism. We cannot make any

Table 7

Paraprofessional Selection Variables and Methods

Source	*Types of Workers*	*Selection Variables*	*Method(s) of Assessment*
Anthony and Wain (1970)	Aide therapists	Empathy; non-possessive warmth; genuineness.	Ratings of behavior.
Berryman (1968)	Recreation aides	Interest in working with disadvantaged and handicapped; high school diploma, equivalence, or willingness to work for degree.	Counselor interviews.
Birnbaum and Jones (1967)	Social work aides	Aggressiveness; alertness; verbal ability; ability to read and write.	Applicant's ability to complete application forms.
Brager (1965)	Social technicians	Expertise in agency's programs; closely identify with own culture group; action-oriented.	*
Brecher, Kilguss, and Stewart (1968)	Day care aides	Interest; sound health (mental and physical); ability to care for children (should have child 14 years or older).	Interviews.
Bucher, et al. (1968)	*	Interest; good mental and physical health; ability to find child care facilities.	Psychological interviews; indices measuring planning for future.
Cain and Epstein (1967)	Case aides	Interest; intelligence; empathy.	*
Calnan (1967)	Neighborhood aides	Income below the poverty level; location of home within walking distance of people served; participation in neighborhood affairs, e.g., PTA membership.	Completion of a written application form; kept appointment for job interview; presentation of self in job interview.
Coate and Nordstrom (1969)	Home health aides	High school education; 25 years or older; evidence of reliability and honesty; fairly stable home situation; experience in working with people; ability to relate positively; hospital experience.	*
Coggs and Robinson (1967)	Lay workers (in social work)	Experience in volunteer work; above-average knowledge of people; high self-worth; experience in working as an individual; involvement in neighborhood and civic groups.	*
Elston (1967)	Case aides	Ability to communicate; bilingual fluency; able to read and write; eighth grade education.	*
Grant (1967)	Community resource aides	21 years or older; passing a standard physical examination; ability to read, write, and speak English; ability to communicate with people from different walks of life; possession of a driver's license.	*

Table 7 (continued)

Source	*Types of Workers*	*Selection Variables*	*Method(s) of Assessment*
	Health aides	21 years or older; eighth grade education residence in neighborhood for 1 year; able to follow written and oral directions; possession of a driver's license; able to maintain simple records.	*
	Social welfare aides	All of the above as well as: origin from low-income family; one year's experience working with problem people.	*
	Rehabilitation aides	Experience within past 10 years, either paid or unpaid, which has provided understanding and acceptance of disabled or disadvantaged people.	*
Grosser (1969b)	*	A quickness of mind and a capacity for growth with a public capability to lead and organize.	*
	*	Ability to prepare written reports; ability to participate in staff meetings and conferences; should not overidentify with client.	*
	*	A strong personality and a strong commitment to the agency.	*
	Homemaking aides	Homemaking skills; mastery of intricacies of urban slum living; good feeling toward people.	*
	Community workers	Local residence; prior work experience; participation in community organizations (e.g., PTA, union); maturity; ability to work with people; agency loyalty; participation in personal upgrading; willingness to undertake training; high school education or potential for GED.	*
	Direct service workers	Ability to communicate with clients through common language or style; empathy with client through shared life experience; ability to help clients negotiate complexities of the ghetto.	*
	Indigenous nonprofessionals (general)	Mutual interests with community residents; poor; residence in neighborhood served; minority	*

Table 7 (continued)

Source	*Types of Workers*	*Selection Variables*	*Method(s) of Assessment*
		group status; common background and language.	
Hiland (1968)	Public welfare aides	At least a fifth grade education; work experience not needed; does not have to have clean police record; no serious health problems; empathy for clients.	Ratings by staff.
Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff (1968)	Rehabilitation aides, including technical aides and indigenous aides	Age; educational level; ethnic background; community service; previous work history; vocational skills; salary expectation; status as a client. Demonstrated ability in interpersonal relationships; relatively good knowledge of the community; acceptance by the community; sufficient formal training to demonstrate an ability to learn; adequate free time from responsibilities; means for getting about community or work area.	Application forms.
National Social Welfare Assembly (1959)	Case aides	High school degree; aptitude for dealing with social relationships; emotional stability.	*
Neff (1965)	Workshop personnel	Practical experience in workshop of social work; good mental and physical health; get along with and be accepted by people.	Aptitude and dexterity tests.
Office of Career Development (1971)	Community developers	Strong preference for community development; previous involvement in community action; interest in pursuing academic degree with urban affairs interest.	*
Office of State Merit Systems, HEW (1968)	Human services workers	Understanding of disadvantaged persons; ability to communicate with persons to be served, to win their confidence, to help them, to influence them; adaptability; dependability; perseverance.	Questionnaires: questions about knowledge of poverty; caseworker report form on welfare recipient's occupational potentials; structured reference report for human services support classes.
		Ability to learn technical aspects of the job and potential for advancement with training.	Interviews: structured panel interview for human services support classes; structured group discussion for human services support classes. Tests: following directions; task; oral instructions; and adult literacy tests.

Table 7 (continued)

Source	*Types of Workers*	*Selection Variables*	*Method(s) of Assessment*
Reiff and Riessman (1964)	Community workers	Roots and interests in community; positive attitude toward community; ability to work with others; acceptance of supervision; desire and capacity to learn.	*
Riessman (1965a)	*	Does not have too strong client identification or over active need to please client.	*
Riley and Fellin (1970)	*	Motivation for upward mobility; potential for growth; adaptable to agency; concern for community problems; ability to communicate; ability to work with agency staff.	(Specifically excluded written tests).
Schmais (1967)	*	Involvement in community affairs; interest in the problems the agency deals with; contact with the community or neighborhood; ability to relate to people; social maturity; potential leadership qualities.	Application blanks; group interviews; selection panels.
Truax (1965)	Aide therapists	Empathy; non-possessive warmth; genuineness.	Ratings of behavior.
University Research Corporation (1970)	Home health aides	Indigenous to community; appreciation of hardships of clients; accepted by community; interest in others in community; ability to read and write; ability to give instructions to others.	*

*Data not provided

generalizations about the frequency with which it occurs, but it has been referred to as a practice in agencies studied and surveyed by Ahearn (1969), Calnan (1967), and Daniel Yankelovich (1966).

An inspection of Table 7 reveals one more point. A significant number of the studies reviewed gave little specific information about how assessment takes place. When methods were described the information was generally incomplete, and revealed little about what was being measured, the procedures that were followed, or the performance criteria (if any) used to establish the degree of predictive power of the tools.

Methods Used for Paraprofessional Selection

Although our purpose is not to present an exhaustive treatment of psychological testing, its uses with respect to paraprofessionals should be described.

Testing can be thought of as a series of systematic observations of an individual. Tests have been used to measure a range of variables including many of those we have been discussing (e.g., interests, intelligence, attitudes, aptitudes, and personality). Schmais (1967) pointed out a well-accepted caveat that testing in each of these domains requires the knowledge of an expert and should not be carried out indiscriminately. This is particularly true considering the nature of the variables and the types of people being evaluated.

Researchers have found that most of the currently available commercial tests are not suitable for disadvantaged workers. For example, Kirkpatrick, et al. (1967) found little or no correlation between test performance and job performance among the disadvantaged. Enneis (1970a; 1970b) also pointed out that many tests, both those reputed to be culture-fair as well as those involving non-cognitive variables, can discriminate against the disadvantaged worker.[75] Thus, by using tests and focusing on high performance, an agency may actually screen out the very individuals it intends to hire.

Studies of the validation of various tests in the prediction of paraprofessional job performance are few and far between. Those data that are available are disappointing. Although some of the findings deal with workers who are not SWRS paraprofessionals, the results may warrant generalization and are therefore included in this discussion.

Wallace (1966) analyzed data obtained from 55 employed youths in an experimental rehabilitation aide program with the hope of determining the best predictor of job satisfaction after one year of work. He used job satisfaction, measured by a questionnaire, as the variable being predicted. Sub-test scores from the General Aptitude Test Battery, Kuder Preference Record, IPAT Anxiety, California Test of Personality, Social Class Value Orientation, Rural-Urban Orientation, and a biographical inventory were used as the predictors. The best predictor of job success was the biographical inventory. It accounted for 51 percent of the variability in job satisfaction.

Cliff, et al. (1959) conducted a study of the selection of paraprofessional hospital care personnel to determine the aptitude and personality tests which could be used in the selection process. One hundred and fifty subjects were given a battery of these tests and were also rated on job performance criteria by five professional nurses. The correlations between the ratings and the various tests in the battery were very low. Only one of the tests, Ability to Follow Oral Directions, had a significant relationship. Cliff's conclusion was that the validity of that particular test appeared to be attributable to the fact that it was a test of general ability.

Orr (1958) reached a similar conclusion after administering the Kent Emergency Intelligence Test and the Rorschach to 100 psychiatric aides. Yerbury, et al. (1951) had better success than Orr with the Rorschach when it was coupled with an I.Q. measure as a selection tool. They administered the Rorschach with the Revised Beta Examination to 113 psychiatric aides; however, only 32 percent of the good employees were correctly identified.

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[75] This problem has long been of concern to psychometricians. Its magnitude is documented in detail in an entire special issue of The American Psychologist, edited by Amrine (1965).

Jesse Gordon (1969) published one of the few documents which attempted to assess some of the impacts of testing on disadvantaged paraprofessionals. He concluded that tests had only minimal utility in the selection of disadvantaged youths for MDTA experimental and demonstration projects. A list of the various tests used in the projects he surveyed is presented in Table 8.

Table 8
Tests Used in MDTA Projects

Name of Test	*No. of Projects Using Test*
General Aptitude Test Battery	14
Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale	13
Kuder Preference Record	7
Thematic Apperception Test	7
Wide Range Achievement Test	6
Wonderlic Personnel Test	6
Revised Beta (intelligence)	5
Bender-Gestalt	4
Gates Reading	4
Gray Oral Reading	4
Minnesota Clerical	4
Rorschach	4
Stanford Achievement	4
Differential Aptitude	3
Metropolitan Achievement	3
Minnesota Paper Form Board	3
Otis Intelligence	3
Raven Progressive Matrices	3
SRA Mechanical Aptitude	3
Woody-McCall Arithmetic Fundamentals	3
Bennett Mechanical Comprehension	2
CATB	2
California Achievement	2
Crawford Tweezer and Screwdriver	2
Draw-A-Person	2
General Clerical Test	2
House-Tree-Person	2
IPAT	2
Lorge-Thorndike Intelligence	2
Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory	2
Mooney Problem Check List	2

Table 8 (continued)

Name of Test	*No. of Projects Using Test*
O'Connor Dexterity	2
Purdue Pegboard	2
Armed Forces Qualification Test	1
Armed Forces Classification Test	1
Bennett Hand Tool	1
Edwards Personal Preference Test	1
Flanagan Aptitude	1
Flanagan Coordination	1
Flanagan Arithmetic	1
Flanagan Inspection	1
Gates-McKillop Reading	1
Hackman-Gaither Interest	1
Hand Test	1
Iowa Test of Basic Skills	1
Kuhlman-Anderson Intelligence	1
Los Angeles Reading	1
MacQuarrie Test of Mechanical Ability	1
Minnesota Achievement Series	1
O'Connor Wiggly Blocks	1
Progressive Achievement (reading)	1
Purdue Non-Language Intelligence	1
Rosenzweig Picture-Frustration	1
SRA Achievement Series	1
Sentence Completion	1
Slosson Intelligence	1
Stanford-Binet Intelligence	1
Stromberg Test	1
Survey of Mechanical Insight	1
Thurstone Clerical	1
Thurstone Mental Alertness	1
Thurstone Typing	1
Vocational Values Inventory	1
Sixteen Personality Factors	1

As can be seen from the table, the range and type of tests used are quite varied. Despite this Gordon found the results disappointing. He concluded that

> these relatively slim findings support the writer in his position that most psychological and vocational tests are of no, or only marginal, validity for use with disadvantaged youth. (page 40)

Fine (1969) took an even stronger position against the use of tests:

> With the possible exception of work-sample tests, which are akin to on-the-job tryout, no tests are very useful in hiring the culturally disadvantaged. Whether the tests are non-verbal or so-called "culture-free" tests, they are all unfair. Basically, tests show how well, in comparison with his peers, the testee has absorbed his culture and education. Obviously, testing individuals who have not really participated in the same culture will merely prove what we already know—that they are culturally disadvantaged as far as technology and employment are concerned. (p. 12)

In summary, the limited work done in testing paraprofessionals has not been highly successful. This has been particularly true of tests measuring the affective and temperamental attributes considered so essential by many of the persons responsible for selection decisions.[76] [77]

One of the most frequently mentioned techniques for evaluating and selecting paraprofessionals was the interview, but very little detail was provided on how interviews proceeded, who conducted them, and what they contained.[78]

The emphasis on the interview is understandable. The paraprofessional's job requires verbal communication and the ability to engage in personal exchanges. Interviews have long been viewed as an ideal means of assessing these attributes. To see the potential paraprofessional and observe his appearance are apparently considered important by various users of the technique.

One of the few people to talk about the use of interviews was Schmais (1967). He described two types of group formats. In the first, a group is assembled and the program is explained. Application forms are then distributed and each person fills out one. The interviewer checks the forms and engages each applicant in a discussion of the information on the form. In the other group interview, the application forms are filled out by applicants before the group is assembled and the program explained. Questions are asked and attempts are made to get each applicant to talk. The responses of the applicants and their behavior in the group are observed and evaluated.

The success of the technique rests primarily on the ability of the interviewer to draw the applicant into conversation. This brief exchange may be too limited for making evaluations of the rather ephemeral qualities described earlier. Despite these limitations and the rather impressive evidence of biasing factors in the interview situation (Carlson, et al., 1970; Hakel and Dunnette, 1968; Webster, 1964), it continues to be a favorite tool for screening applicants for paraprofessional positions.

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[76] For additional research data on personality measure and job performance in the human services, the reader is referred to Cattell and Shotwell (1954), Cuadra and Reed (1957), Sidney (1958), Tarjan, et al. (1955), and the more recent work of Truax and Carkhuff (1967).

[77] The use of tests has been affected by the ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court that tests that discriminate must be shown to be related to job performance. (*Griggs vs. Duke Power Co.*, 1971).

[78] This situation in paraprofessional selection is apparently no different from the use of interviews in general personnel practice (Wright, O. R., 1969). The interview remains one of the most widely used and poorly understood instruments in personnel selection.

At times, particularly in programs involving community residents, selection panels consisting of members of the community are used to screen applicants (Grosser, 1969b). Although some problems can arise (e.g., patronage), Grosser felt this device helps to ensure the participation and involvement of local residents and shows a commitment to the community by the agency.

Schmais (1967) felt that the completed application form could be a valuable means of screening applicants for a program. There is no doubt that biodata can be useful in sorting out those applicants definitely not suited for employment. He recommended that the minimum information to be supplied on an application blank should be:

- *personal data*—name, address, telephone number, age, sex, marital status, social security, draft status, etc.;
- *work history*—jobs held, nature of work, name and title of former supervisor;
- *education*—highest grade completed in school, enrollment in any special training courses;
- *organizational activity*—any community activities the applicant has engaged in;
- *health*—information on any serious health problem.

A variable considered important by many writers is the demographic and biographic history of applicants. This importance is further underscored by certain types of legislation which require the screening of paraprofessionals on the basis of demography (e.g., former client status); while certain attitudes and value patterns are related to biographic history (e.g. indigenousness). Considering these facts, it is surprising that more attention has not been given to the systematic use of data supplied in application forms.

TRAINING

Once the recruitment and selection of paraprofessional staff have been completed, an agency must decide how to train them. Questions arise about training needs, training objectives, training methods, types of trainers, and the location, scheduling, and duration of training programs. Agencies must evaluate several factors in answering these questions.

Training Objectives

The specific nature of a training program will depend upon the characteristics of the people hired and the jobs they will be called upon to perform.

The Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff (1968) noted that the jobs trainees are expected to perform must be defined prior to training. If they comprise task relief activities (see Chapter 4), training may be limited to a demonstration of the tasks identified in the job factoring process and practice by the trainee until he achieves specified standards. However, if new kinds of activities (in the job development sense) are being expected of the paraprofessionals, then job definition and training objectives require much more care in development. Gartner (1969a) favors the job development process as a means of defining jobs. In this process, the purposes of the agency and the needs of the community would first be explored, then objectives meeting these needs would be defined, and, finally, specific tasks would be delineated to meet the objectives.

Goals, both short- and long-term, which state what the trainee should be able to do, would be set early in the design of the training program to guide decisions on the content, methods, budgets, and scheduling of training activity. The range of goals which could be set for paraprofessional training programs is extremely broad, as a list suggested by the Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff (1968) will illustrate. This committee proposed that programs be designed to:

- provide training and work experience under selected conditions;
- develop desirable attitudes toward work;
- increase trainees' understanding of human relations and their ability to work with people with sensitivity and social skill;
- help trainees function successfully as vocational rehabilitation aides (typical duties, basic laws and procedures regarding rehabilitation work, sociological understanding of poverty, etc.);
- help trainees gain a sense of confidence in their own ability, and promote an interest in further advancement educationally and vocationally;
- teach trainees how to fill in forms, keep records, and make appointments, and other skills related to assisting Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors;
- develop desirable attitudes on professional ethics;
- develop desirable attitudes towards kinds of clients they may have (alcoholics, narcotic addicts, physically disabled, patients from mental hospitals, culturally handicapped, etc.).

Someone only remotely familiar with training would recognize that this list covers the spectrum of possible training goals. It includes orienting trainees to the world of work, fostering an understanding of human relations and interpersonal relationships, imparting sociological and technical knowledge (e.g., understanding of poverty, rehabilitation laws), developing professional ethics and a sense of upward mobility, and teaching specific job skills and standard operating procedures.

This array is typical of the ambitious expectations held out for many paraprofessional training programs. Whether these goals are realistic is subject to debate. It seems likely that even the most carefully planned program would find it extremely difficult to achieve all these ends.

Major Components of Training

In 1966, Grant described what was involved in paraprofessional training. She saw three major components that had to be considered simultaneously: the training of the paraprofessionals themselves; the training of professionals associated with them; and the training of the trainers. We shall organize our discussion according to this framework, recognizing, as Grant did, that most emphasis has been given to the first group.

Training of Paraprofessionals. The three common types of paraprofessional training are orientation, core training, and in-service training.

According to Schmais (1967), the purpose of orientation is to acquaint the trainee with the work situation, the goals and structure of the agency, and basic rules and policies, and to tell him what is expected of him as an employee. Orientation may serve several useful functions. It may be used: to identify trainees who have difficulty in adapting to the work situation; to provide the trainee with an opportunity to adjust to the idea of himself as an agency worker rather than a client; and to deal with logistical problems associated with work (e.g., arranging child care, transportation).

Schmais felt that some work skills should be taught during orientation, particularly those that can give entering workers a sense of adequacy. He suggested, for example, activities like letter-writing, interviewing, appointment scheduling, and time budgeting. Severely disadvantaged workers without these skills may face job adjustment problems. Schmais saw the orientation phase, because it occurs early in the training, as an excellent opportunity for beginning to overcome some of the more personal problems affecting job performance.

Evaluating the results of an orientation program is not simple. Two methods have been proposed by the Manpower Administration, Department of Labor (1969b):

- *Objective Measures*—In the areas of money management, wage accounting, consumer education and the like, short informal tests may be given to measure mastery of the skill. Realistic transportation problems may be assigned and the results checked. Changes in dress and grooming may be compared between the time of entry and some point in the program. One may note whether the trainee followed through on referrals to supportive services such as medical and dental examinations. Attitudes and self-concepts can be gauged from self-rating scales and devices like the Q-sort, in which the trainee sorts a series of statements into stacks from "most like me" to "least like me." These become the basis of an image profile.

- *Subjective Measures*—Where attitudes, motivations, interests, or social development are concerned, evaluation necessarily becomes more subjective. Members of the staff can detect marked changes. Some individuals will change in a steady, evolutionary manner. Others will seem to change in periodic jumps. The staff should arrange for conferences between trainees, supervisors, and specialists to discuss the progress of some individuals. Some projects have found peer evaluations very useful in matters of dress, grooming, motivations, and social development.

There is little evidence that such measures are being used to evaluate orientation or the other phases of training. Most of the data about the changes in trainees, when cited, seem to be impressionistic.

Core training is one of the most frequently used terms in the literature on paraprofessional training. There is little agreement among authors, however, on its objectives, content, or methods.

Grant (1966) recommended that it focus on specific skills and interpersonal behavior. Schmais (1967) contended that it should be broad enough to include general knowledge, conceptual and theoretical topics, and problem solving. The extent of this diversity will be apparent in a later section where we present summary data.

In-service training, as currently carried out, is merely an extension of selected aspects of core training.[79] At this stage, the recipient is no longer a trainee but a worker, and in-service training usually takes the form of on-the-job training by supervisors or regular staff (Grosser, 1969a, 1969b). As one would expect, the emphasis of this training typically is on immediate job-related skills or problems.[80]

Training of Professionals. Most writers seem to agree that the training of professionals ought to concentrate on preparing them to deal with paraprofessionals, whose entry into an organization can be unsettling for all concerned.[81]

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[79] This is true in those agencies where core training is given. Although we do not have an exhaustive data base, we have the impression that core training is often omitted or given very superficially. A typical progression seems to be to move from a brief orientation into some type of loosely-structured on-the-job training. Grosser (1969a) pointed out that in many poverty projects training takes a back seat because of pressure to produce services.

[80] Editor's Note: The confusion and disagreement about the content and methods in orientation, core, and on-the-job training can be clarified by S.A. Fine's conception of the three kinds of skills involved in human performance (Fine, 1967b). These skills are functional skills, specific content skills, and adaptive skills, and are acquired at different times and under different conditions. Functional skills include those competencies that enable a worker to relate to data, people, and things to a level of complexity appropriate to his abilities (e.g., comparing, compiling, or analyzing data; exchanging information with, consulting or supervising people; and tending or operating machines). These skills are usually acquired in educational, training, and avocational pursuits and are reinforced in specific job situations. Specific content skills include those competencies that enable a worker to perform a specific job according to the standards, specifications, and procedures of a particular organization. These skills are usually acquired in advanced technical training, on-the-job training, or in a specific job. Adaptive skills include such competencies as management of oneself in relation to authority; to impulse control; to moving toward, away from, or against others; to time; care of property, etc. These skills, rooted in temperament, are normally acquired in the early developmental years, primarily in the family and among one's peers, and reinforced in school.

[81] We will discuss these staff interactions and adjustments in more detail in Chapter 6.

Professional reactions more often than not show up in the form of resistance which, according to Grant (1966), may emerge as a condescending attitude toward the new workers; fears that standards of service will be lowered; extreme reluctance or extreme eagerness to give up part of one's job; and unwillingness to assume a supervisory role. There seems to be general agreement that preparation should take place well in advance of the introduction of paraprofessionals if the program is a new one, and should emphasize the cultural differences with which professionals will have to cope. Overemphasis on differences can, of course, create unnecessary anxieties and prove to be dysfunctional in the long run.

Elston (1967) seemed to feel that an effective way to prepare the professional staff would be to involve them in developing roles and tasks for the paraprofessionals. Writing about the New York Department of Social Services, she stated:

> In New York City members of the Department's training staff worked with supervisory personnel to develop the job descriptions of the new Case Aide Trainees. The supervisory personnel came to the meeting with mixed feelings of curiosity and anxiety. They might well have expected to receive directives on how to use the aides. Instead they heard a concise statement of the goals of the program and sketchy descriptions of the aides' background, followed by a question as to how they might use the aides to assist them. There was a moment of silence. Then those who picked up the idea quickly began to contribute their suggestions. As suggestions lagged, training staff filled in some of the blanks, doing so in the form of a question rather than a statement. "Would aides be of help to you in handling forms? Which forms in particular?" Training officers had prepared a list of possible tasks prior to the meeting, but preferred to let those present direct the discussion and to use the list only to give breadth to the job descriptions which emerged. (p. 12)

If the purpose of paraprofessional utilization is clearly that of task relief for the professionals, this strategy can be expected to produce many useful suggestions. If, however, the paraprofessionals are to be used autonomously as outreach workers or advocates to change the direction of services, some resistance to defining the requisite tasks may be expected. Before embarking on participation of staff in redefining jobs and roles, trainers and planners should provide participating workers with technical tools and guidance, and prepare them to cope with the conflicts which can be expected to arise. If the principle of staff involvement is followed, it seems unwise to include one group of workers and exclude another, especially when both are equally interested in the outcome.

The elements of a professional training program need to be established early. Schmais (1967) suggested they include the following:

- getting acquainted with the general characteristics of the paraprofes-

sional, his style, unique qualities, and skills (it can be assumed that most professionals will be unaware of these);
- planning specific paraprofessional job functions and tasks that can take advantage of these characteristics;
- acquiring techniques for dealing with the anticipated stresses and anxieties encountered by paraprofessionals when working with professionals in professional settings;
- learning specific techniques of supervision and how to adapt traditional methods to paraprofessionals;
- learning to recognize and deal with problems related to confidentiality, authority, competition, and relations with the community;
- getting familiar with the differences in cultural styles;
- developing criteria for judging competence and evaluating paraprofessional performance. (p. 59)

Training of Trainers. Very little discussion can be found in the literature concerning the amount and type of training for those responsible for instructing the paraprofessionals. Inferences may be drawn, however, from the characteristics of the paraprofessionals to be trained. The Manpower Administration, Department of Labor (1969b) prepared a list of characteristics which might typify the entering paraprofessional, particularly from a disadvantaged background:

- reading, writing, and arithmetic skills will generally be lower than their years of schooling would indicate;
- learning will be hampered by living conditions, problems, and negative attitudes toward classroom situations;
- trainees will generally be silent because of fear, inhibitions, or lack of vocabulary;
- there will be tendencies twoard aggression, acting out, and limit testing;
- trainees will have outside demands on their time (e.g., household duties, children);
- experience will be lacking in weighing the pros and cons of an action before taking it;
- trainees will have many attributes which should be built upon (e.g., natural wit, intrinsic abilities, positive motivation, ability to adapt quickly).

Although the list cannot fit all groups it is a good blend of positive and negative attributes. It also avoids the obvious risks of stereotyping the paraprofessional, and describes the assets as well as the problems the new workers bring to the training situation.[82]

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[82] Empirical data on which to base such statements of attitudes, orientations, and expectancies are sorely needed. As we have described in earlier chapters, most characterizations are based either on extrapolations from general sociological theory or on inferences drawn from limited demographic data.

Training Approaches and Vehicles

As one might expect, approaches to paraprofessional training are varied. Like training in general, paraprofessional training is susceptible to styles and fads. One finds fairly frequent and thoughtful treatment of "rap" sessions, "buzz" groups, and encounter sessions.

Few writers have any deep or long-standing experience of paraprofessional training because the movement is relatively young. Those trainers who have had substantial experience report that their opinions about training have changed because of it. Cudaback (1968) indicated this very clearly:

> In my work with aides I have moved from believing that all we need to do is free aides to use their native sensitivity and commonsense, to my present view of their needing more disciplined formalized educational program and theoretical framework to augment their considerable natural abilities—and aides are the first to request this additional instruction. Just how to do this effectively, while preserving the unique qualities that make them effective aides and differentiate them from social workers, is mind boggling . . . So far, it seems classes built on experience-based discussions, laced with non-jargonal theory, work best, complemented by short, simple, sensible readings, and down-to-earth, brief, but frequent written assignments. (p. 12)

The literature reflects some agreement that paraprofessionals should receive their training in a group setting (Grosser, 1969a; Otis, 1965; Riessman, 1965a; Willcox, 1970). Riessman and Otis argued for it on the basis of group cohesiveness and anxiety reduction. Willcox pointed out that, in addition to these advantages, it is more economical and effective. Grosser warned against fostering too much cohesiveness and reducing paraprofessional training to indoctrination.

There seemed to be little agreement, however, on how specific or formal the training should be. Most writers felt that structured classroom type situations ought to be avoided, particularly with paraprofessionals from disadvantaged backgrounds. Willcox (1970) offered some fairly specific recommendations. In initial training he suggested: a focus on specific job duties; group settings as frequently as possible; ample time to talk and work through anxieties; and some field experience very early in the process.

In the on-going training process he recommended that: the group process be continued; job, not personal, problems be stressed; job issues be used to teach self-awareness; and role-playing be emphasized.

This concurred largely with the view of Riessman (1965a) that: academic subjects and climate ought to be played down; teaching should be concrete and explicit; field work should start early and emphasize learning-by-doing; and role playing and job simulation should be used.

Despite differences among authors, several common themes were emphasized:

- agencies should be aware they will probably underestimate the time required for the supervision and training of paraprofesssionals;
- training should be integrated with job activity as early as possible;
- paraprofessionals will learn more quickly from activity and discussion than from lectures;
- training should concentrate on promoting strengths rather than improving areas of weakness;
- emphasis should be placed on role playing as a teaching device;
- concrete aspects of activity should be emphasized over abstract dimensions;
- training should avoid "professionalizing" paraprofessionals;
- training should encourage diversity rather than conformity;
- simple, immediately useful skills should be taught first;
- there should be immediate feedback on performance.

These are useful guidelines to follow and should be familiar to anyone acquainted with the literature on training. They are nothing more than sound principles of learning and it would be well to follow them at all levels of SWRS training, including that of the professional worker.

In our discussion thus far we have drawn selectively from a limited number of authors who have talked at some length about the training process. In order to broaden the presentation we have prepared Table 9, which provides summary descriptions of a number of additional references and information about source, program objectives, techniques, training content, and problems. Although much of the material is specific enough to stand on its own, some comments are in order.

The specificity of training objectives varies greatly. Many sources have generic guidelines which provide little in the way of specific objectives for program operation. Others have fairly concrete operational objectives. Still others appear not to have stated any objectives at all. Despite the exhortation to concreteness, training programs with all-encompassing goals appear to be most frequent. These provide few suggestions for evaluation criteria. The exceptions to this are the training programs for the New Career paraprofessionals, most of which seem to be specific and make serious attempts to define objectives operationally for each segment of training.

Techniques in general stress active learning, with on-the-job training mentioned most frequently. When group processes are used, there is heavy emphasis on role-playing and discussions.

The content of training is varied, clearly reflecting the different motives of utilization (see Chapter 4). Some programs seem designed to model the trainee in the professional's image, emphasizing social skills, theory, and professional ethics. Others, exploiting the uniqueness of the paraprofessional with an eye to sharpening his natural talents for use in a service context, concentrate on basic, useable, job-related skills.

Table 9
Summary Characteristics of Paraprofessional Training Programs

Source	*Objectives*	*Techniques*	*Content*	*Problems*
Birnbaum and Jones (1967)	*	Task related on-the-job training (OJT). Research aides met with the research trainers. Aides undertook diverse activities from beginning.	Initial orientation in routines, policies, procedures. Learn to administer questionnaires. Some on-going training and guidance for trainers of aides.	*
Brody (1968)	Immediate job skills as a short-range goal, long-range goal of job progression and concurrent training. Goal is careers, not simply jobs.	One-fifth of the employee's work week should be "released time" to acquire additional training or education. In-service courses provided with college credit. Site-based courses with clinical supervisors providing courses.	Course content directed toward utilizing field experience.	On-the-job vestibule training is aimed only toward aiding the trainee to learn his job and perform it efficiently.
Coate and Nordstrom (1969)	Mastery of the aide's multidimensional role depended on a sound comprehension of the psycho-social needs of clients. Two main goals: a) developing sensitivity to the client's psycho-social needs; b) increasing the aide's self-awareness.	Eight-week course. Social service training in three non-structured discussions. Information supported by case material or role playing.	Various theoretical practical areas. Developing sound approaches to working with the patient's family. Getting grasp of problems resulting from overdirectness. Increasing sensitivity by listening; developing objectivity.	Difficult for the groups to grasp basic social work concepts unless discussed in a specific frame of reference or in terms of an actual case. Some trainees are fearful or ambivalent while taking part in role playing.
Coggs and Robinson (1967)	*	Role playing, "buzz sessions," lectures, demonstrations.	"Employment courtesy"—based on the social work code of ethics.	*

			Parliamentary procedure; duties of organization officers, "rule of the majority and the rights of the minority."	
Manpower Administration, Department of Labor (1969a)	Directed to building a broad knowledge base encompassing the rationale behind the program as well as preparation for specific tasks.	Trips around state, attendance at meetings, participation in conferences and conventions, visits to legislative bodies.	Strong doctrinaire character, designed to encourage agency loyalty and interpret agency programs and policies. New Careerist training focused on correcting deficiencies in basic education skills and exposing them to new experiences. Developing organizational, job-related, and general social skills.	Training programs are part of the training offered the total project staff in general. Formal orientation period and in-service training consisting of staff meetings, often sporadic. Pressure to "push the trainees through quickly and avoid wasting time on non-essentials." Proposals to centralize training or negotiate training contracts with local academic institutions encountered resistance.
Elston (1967)	*	One hour of instruction for each two hours of work; after 10 weeks the instructional component was dropped. Rewriting manual to be used for programmed instruction.	Simple, immediately useful skills taught initially. Training to understand roles and relationships to others in the agency.	Professionals' fear of a degradation of performance standards and increased supervisory burdens. Time must be reallocated to provide for in-service training and education for professionals and non-professionals.
Gartner (1969d)	Combine work, training, and education. Provide opportunity for rapid advancement. Provide immediately usable skills.	"Release-framework basis": short preservice training program (4-6 weeks); flexible work-training, starting with 3 days of training and 2 days of work, eventually with one-fifth of time spent in training.	Basic tasks (in preservice training): filling out forms; answering specific questions; providing services to clients.	Standard undergraduate curriculum not suited to paraprofessionals' needs or knowledge. Colleges must reconsider typical practice of granting credit only for on-campus work.

Table 9 (continued)

Source	*Objectives*	*Techniques*	*Content*	*Problems*
Georgia Department of Family and Children Services (1969)	Training the poor to help the poor—help themselves while helping others.	Learn through doing (role-playing, job simulation, OJT). Reading and writing assignments when ready. Activity rather than lecture. Team approach. Informal supervision. Freedom of nonprofessional to develop his personal style. Frequent illustrations, summaries.	Office routine, personnel policies. Administrative framework. Philosophy of agency. Various programs administered. Personnel in department. Social work methods, goals, and tasks. Basic concepts and principles of social work. Lines of communication and authority. Community resources.	
Community Relations Division, Baltimore City Department of Social Services (undated)	To learn to operate as a member of a team made up of caseworkers, preprofessionals, and community organization personnel. To learn to enable families to effectively deal with their environment by assisting in the areas of home management, improving the "liveability" of the home, and utilization of community resources, and by teaching concepts of self-advocacy.	Small group discussion. Role playing. Discussions involving all project staff. Visual aids. Sessions with guest speakers. Field visits and demonstrations. Agency and department tours. Direct contact with clients in agency reception room. Home visits with case workers.	Knowledge of agency-division-program. Knowledge of neighborhood. Knowledge of community resources. Knowledge and use of pertinent social work concepts. Knowledge of specific job skills.	

		Study of neighborhood. Use of "Family Aids Kit."		
Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff (1968)	Provide selected training conditions. Develop desirable attitudes toward work. Increase trainee's understanding of human relations. Gain confidence. Provide opportunities for work sampling. Develop understanding of professional ethics. Develop desirable attitudes toward various types of clients.	Much training on the job. Role playing. Review of current case material. Unstructured discussion in peer groups. New skills introduced when jobs demand them.	Emphasis on: general area of human relations; job tasks of counselors and aides; confidentiality; code of ethics; counseling techniques; relating to others in agency. Remedial education for those who need it. Learning to accept, utilize, and profit from supervision. Attitudes toward work, communication skills, personal grooming, self-concept.	Due to the newness of the positions, experience in one phase may alter the duties of the aide, resulting in change in the training plan. Anxiety is increased with the anticipation of duties; training should be as brief as possible.
Otis (1965)	Help the recruit recognize that he knows more than he is giving himself credit for. Vehicle for interpreting the role of the agency and specific ways in which the recruit will be expected to provide assistance.	Emphasis on concrete material. Field experience should start early with lectures and book-work kept to a minimum. Role-playing. "An exceedingly explicit down-to-earth style." Group training to enhance feelings of security and cohesion.	Focus on likely problem areas included in recruit's orientation: confidentiality; over-identification with the agency and under-identification with the community; acceptance of authority; over-optimism turning to defeatism; relationships to intra- and inter-agency professionals.	Need to interpret the program to the public at large.
Riessman (1967)	Pre-job training oriented to providing trainees with ability to perform simplest entry features of the job.	Field or site-based training. Short pre-service training in protected environment. Phased, programmed, step-by-step training.	Pre-job period of 3 weeks with emphasis on operational tasks. Two weeks in neighborhood service center.	Ambiguity of new paraprofessional roles. Relationship between training and job performance more difficult because of paraprofessionals' lack of skills.

Table 9 (continued)

Source	Objectives	Techniques	Content	Problems
		Systematic, in-service training related to OJT. Team or group training. Role playing and job simulation in pre-job phase with little didactic presentation.	On-going training at center (one-fifth time).	
Schmais (1967)	Development of individuals' ability to perform tasks or to improve present levels of performance. Training is the overall attempt to modify behavior so that trainees become more capable of performing tasks. First consideration is achieving an understanding and agreement on the nature of the job and the specific requirements. Goals of core (basic) training: to provide the trainee with the necessary information, understanding, knowledge, and job skills to become an effective member of the staff.	Expose the trainees, from the very outset, to a set of experiences as close to reality as possible. Problem-solving best proceeds with paraprofessionals when connected with activity, not an intellectual exercise. Training in groups or teams provides paraprofessionals with the experience of membership and sharing. Self study—includes self-instructional materials, programmed instruction, organized reading, report writing, and making presentations. Self-understanding—learning to understand others and social and environmental conditions as they affect the individual.	*Orientation* Development of primary skills: —writing letters —making personal contact —arranging appointments —gathering data —eliciting information, also some exposure to theory and principles. *Core training* 1. Conceptual—theory tied to current experiences and practices (i.e., economic sociological factors influencing the client population). 2. Information and general knowledge—particular characteristics of the population and the community. 3. Skill—training about a highly specific job or about human services in general. 4. Interpersonal—trainee's relationship with coworkers, staff and clients.	Paraprofessional experiences anxiety due to the ambiguity of his role. Although the paraprofessionals share the same backgrounds as the clients, how they perceive and react to it may differ greatly. Professional indifference to development of the paraprofessional. Excessive service burdens demanded too early. Inadequate amount of time for phasing-in.

Sobey (1970)	Overall attempt to modify behavior so that trainees become more capable of performing tasks. Dependent upon the acquisition and refinement of skills and knowledge. Gaining and deepening insight and self-understanding.	OJT—apprentice-type training alone or in combination with didactic instruction. Special training methods: project staff workshops, training sessions or symposia; monthly in-service meetings; weekly staff meeting, all project staff; daily staff conferences for paraprofessionals; training during group sessions with patients, paraprofessionals and professionals present.	Sensitivity skills, observational techniques, family life education.	Hiring of paraprofessionals will often reinforce the social distance between paraprofessionals and clients; may set off a feeling of superiority, annoyance, or impatience with those the paraprofessional is to help. May require more supervision.
Truax (1965)	*	Didactic training uses research scales for shaping the trainees' responses to high levels of empathy, warmth, and genuineness. Group therapy utilizes self-exploration and integrates the didactic training and personal goals, values, and life styles. Empathy, warmth and genuineness training through playback of patient talk requiring "immediate therapeutic responses." Role play which is recorded and evaluated by peers, becoming basis for competition among trainees. One-shot interviews with real patient; recorded and rated. Less than 100 hours over 3-month period.	Therapeutic context—supervisor communicates high levels of accurate empathy, nonpossessive warmth, and genuineness to the trainees. Highly specific didactic training. Quasi-group therapy experience which allows the emergence of the trainees' own "idiosyncratic therapeutic self." Taught use of the scales so they know how to identify high and low levels of empathy.	*

Training problems are internal and external to the trainees. Internal problems reflect the conflicts and anxieties that can arise within the trainees. External problems may be reluctance of some professionals to accept paraprofessionals, inadequate supervision, and time and money constraints which push the trainees through the training programs too quickly.

DEPLOYMENT

Deployment as a separate issue is rarely discussed in the literature. Much of what is said is based on inferences or on limited field experiences. We see three basic patterns of deployment emerging: centralized-concentrated; centralized-diffuse; and decentralized.

In the centralized-concentrated pattern, the paraprofessionals are concentrated in a particular unit (e.g., a day-care center) attached to the central organization of an establishment. They are given a fairly homogeneous set of tasks, usually under the supervision of a limited number of professionals, and have minimum contact with other professionals and maximum contact with one another. This deployment pattern closely resembles the "plantation system" of staffing (Gartner, 1971).

In the centralized-diffuse pattern, the paraprofessionals are deployed throughout the units of a centralized operation. They are under the close supervision of a professional and function almost as apprentices.[83]

In decentralized deployment, the paraprofessionals are spread out in a loosely-knit, mobile operation. They may be in neighborhood centers, storefronts, a central office, or the homes of clients. This corresponds most closely to the New Career image of paraprofessional deployment.

The data on which these observations are based are very limited. Deployment is obviously linked to utilization, supervisory style, and the expectancies of both the paraprofessionals and their agencies.

Summary Observations

The assimilation of paraprofessionals is a sequential process of recruitment, screening, selection, training, and deployment.

The basic conflict of paraprofessional utilization—whether he should be an extension of the professional or the client—is clearly revealed in the literature on selection and training. At least in the literature describing selection criteria, the former motive seems to dominate. A composite of the ideal paraprofessional based on these criteria resembles not only the professional worker but an exceptional one at that. This expectation persists despite the fact that the typical paraprofessional is demographically far from this image.

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[83] This has been referred to as the "Adam's rib" pattern.

Most training programs seem to articulate goals and devise content to remodel the paraprofessional in the image of the professional worker. This takes place in the midst of avowals that the training process should not destroy the uniqueness the paraprofessional brings to the service setting. There is confusion about when and under what conditions skills are best acquired.

The techniques of selection are not highly developed. Systematic evaluation of biographic history—a growing area of research and a key premise behind the movement—is relatively rare. Validation studies testing the predictions of screening devices against subsequent performance are almost non-existent.

Lest this be seen as an indictment of the paraprofessional movement, we hasten to point out that in microcosm it shares the deficiencies of the whole field of applied social science. The problems described here are serious, but a great deal of work and effort have been expended in trying to solve them. Our concern at this point is that there is little evidence of current knowledge and practice being used and advanced by research.

CHAPTER 6

CONSEQUENCES OF PARAPROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

SUMMARY

Assessing and evaluating the impacts of paraprofessional employment is extremely complicated. A discussion of impact presupposes a correlation with employment motives. Since such motives are usually not specified clearly in the literature, interpretation of consequences is difficult. Social service intervention takes place in a complex environment. The impact of a single component (e.g., paraprofessional utilization) is very difficult to isolate. Much of the literature has been generated by writers advocating their own views of paraprofessionalism. Few studies have been conducted with scientific rigor.

In dealing with the problem of employment, there is evidence to indicate that paraprofessionals are able to improve substantially the conditions of their lives.

As a mechanism for increasing service efficiency, paraprofessionalism seems to have produced mixed results. Limited data indicate that paraprofessionals, if given specific duties and responsibilities, can greatly reduce the caseload burdens of the professional. But this relief may create other problems for the professional resulting from the new roles he assumes (e.g., trainer, supervisor) or from role vacuum. Preliminary data from a number of studies indicate that the benefits of paraprofessional utilization may occur over a long period. Short-term consequences may differ from long-range impacts.

Evidence regarding consequences for service effectiveness is extremely limited. Much more controlled research needs to be completed before conclusions can safely be drawn.

Research on attitude change is also limited. Tentative findings indicate that professionals and paraprofessionals benefit from exposure to one another, and are able to modify the stereotyped images they previously held.

Evaluation of paraprofessional manpower utilization programs needs much more research. It currently takes place amidst a host of technical, political, and economic problems, and faces the same difficulties as manpower programs dealing with other segments of the labor force.

Understanding and evaluating the consequences of paraprofessional employment from the literature is difficult for many reasons.

First, the notion of employment consequences implies a direct relationship with employment motives. As we have shown, the motives underlying the paraprofessional movement are varied, rarely distinct, and sometimes contradictory. In the literature of paraprofessionalism they are seldom made explicit or defined in operational terms.

Secondly, the intervention of SWRS workers is part of a complex system of social service. To isolate the contribution of one component (e.g., paraprofessionals) is a difficult technical task. When this component is linked to outside forces (e.g., unemployment), the attempt to assess impacts is mind-boggling.

Finally, assessment is complicated by a lack of objectivity. Most writers, administrators, practitioners, or researchers, tend to be partisans in the debate on paraprofessionalism. Few approach this topic without decided preferences for one motive or strategy over others. They are usually committed to either task relief (the paraprofessional as an extension of the professional) or changing the nature and delivery of services (the paraprofessional as an autonomous change agent).

QUALITY OF AVAILABLE DATA

The literature of paraprofessionalism can be roughly divided by content and methodology into seven major categories:

- policy papers describing the idea of paraprofessionalism;
- papers describing possible roles or duties for paraprofessionals;
- comprehensive theoretical models for paraprofessional utilization, including implications for implementation;
- summaries of anecdotal experiences of people (other than the writer) who have used paraprofessionals;
- first-hand impressions by those who have worked with paraprofessionals;
  studies involving data collection on, or from, paraprofessionals during the process of utilization (including job analyses, surveys, questionnaires, or interviews);
- comparative studies, involving control groups, which attempt to analyze the contribution of the paraprofessional in a defined service system with measurable objectives.

Almost all the available material falls into the first four categories. Much of it is speculative, theoretical, abstract, and written at a comfortable distance from the arena in which the paraprofessional is at work. Literature by people actually working with paraprofessionals is not extensive,[84] and data are seldom based on systematic observations (e.g., structured interviews, questionnaires).[85] It is difficult to judge whether these observations are reliable and valid.

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[84] At first glance this may not seem to be the case. However, closer examination of these studies reveals repetition of data published elsewhere.

Studies using empirical data typically are based on small samples (fewer than 100 people). Quite often data collection is restricted to a single setting, agency, or unit. In many instances the circumstances surrounding the study are not described in detail. Consequently, it is difficult to reconstruct or isolate the elements (e.g., utilization, type of supervision, amount of training, worker expectations, type of clients) that contributed to whatever impacts are described. This, of course, makes generalization and replication of results difficult.

Research on paraprofessionals is almost always cross-sectional rather than longitudinal in design, that is, data typically are collected at a single point in time and seldom repeated in follow-up activities. This precludes the measurement of changes over a period of time and the attribution of such changes, if warranted, to events which took place during that period. In the absence of longitudinal research, any discussion of consequences or impacts skates on thin ice.

There are formidable technical and political problems associated with research on paraprofessional utilization. For example, there are currently 18 designations for the paraprofessional and no clear agreement as to who he is or what he does. He functions in a wide array of settings ranging from small ghetto storefronts to monolithic agencies. There has been no clear delineation of criteria by which to evaluate the consequences of his activities because the purposes for which he might be used have not always been stated clearly. In agencies with short-term funding to support paraprofessional programs, there is pressure to achieve results quickly and a temptation to emphasize positive "findings" in order to stimulate continued appropriations. This pressure makes hard data difficult to come by. In agencies which have continuing support for paraprofessional programs (e.g., public welfare), demonstration projects are usually conducted under the watchful eyes of professional associations, various activist groups, and other interested parties, all of whom have a vested interest in the outcome of such activities.

These conditions create a situation in which controlled, empirical, policy-oriented, social science research is very hard to conduct and has not been attempted often.

CONSEQUENCES RELATED TO MOTIVES

Providing Employment

One of the several purposes of paraprofessionalism has been to reduce unemployment. Only limited and sketchy data are available as to how well the movement is accomplishing this end. In an inquiry conducted by the Office of Research, Demonstrations and Training, SRS (1970), states were asked how many of the paraprofessionals currently employed were former public assistance recipients. Data are incomplete, but they seem to indicate that from one-third to one-half of the 11,583 paraprofessionals employed at that time had received public assistance. No employment history on the workers was included, but one may assume that chronic unemployment within this group was high and that paraprofessional jobs reduced it.

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[85] There are, of course, exceptions to this tendency to operate purely on the basis of impressionistic data. The work of Ahearn, Gannon, Grosser, Haug, Sussman, and Truax are examples of more rigorous attempts at investigation.

Data on New Careerists are also available (Wilson, et al., 1969). These were compiled on 53 of the more than 100 New Careers programs existing at that time. Prior to entering the training programs, 61 percent of the enrollees were unemployed, 28 percent were on welfare, and the 11 percent who were employed had an average annual income of $2,100. As New Careerists, 60 percent had jobs paying an average annual salary of $3,880, 37 percent an average of $4,231, and the remaining 3 percent held positions for which salary data were not available. We do not have information on earnings of these workers after the federal funding for these programs ended. It is clear, however, that for a substantial number of individuals (these data cover 7,000 participants in 49 cities) the New Careers program represented a real opportunity to break with a past history of unemployment and poverty.

Many articles describe paraprofessionals as "former clients" or as coming from "poor backgrounds." There are no data other than those cited above to support this, but it does appear that paraprofessionalism has contributed to the relief of unemployment. It is our impression that its contribution may be more extensive than supposed. We regret that it has not been documented more fully.

Solving the Manpower Shortage and Increasing the Efficiency of Service

The most persistent theme running through the literature is that the professional must be relieved of the burdens of work imposed by a shortage of manpower, and that the paraprofessional is the best one to do this by taking on lower-level tasks. The professional is then free to carry out the tasks requiring his skill and better able to provide services to the client.

The case for task relief seems more compelling in theory than in practice, however. Data from a variety of sources (Coate and Nordstrom, 1969; Denham and Shatz, 1969; Gannon, 1968; and Staub and Petree, 1967) seem to indicate that the transition is far from automatic. Adding paraprofessionals to the staffing system of an agency does not of itself provide relief to the professional.

Denham and Shatz (1969) introduced the notion of an institutional culture of chronic shortage. Put simply, their argument was that many professionals have grown so used to carrying out routine activities because of chronic manpower shortages that they have either lost the skills they once had or have not had the opportunity to develop new ones. Faced with the prospect of "released" time to devote to "professional" activities, many simply do not know what to do. As a result, there is a good deal of resistance to role changes.[86]

Another frequently mentioned consequence of the introduction of paraprofessionals was that it increased the time professionals spent on training and supervision. This impact was often unanticipated. Denham and Shatz (1969) mentioned this change of role requirement of the professional. Coate and Nordstrom (1969) saw him emerging as a team leader, the kind of role envisioned for the professional in the "episode of service" (Barker and Briggs, 1968).

The data on this topic are quite subjective. We have seen no analyses of the professional's job before and after the introduction of paraprofessionals. However, the problems reported in the literature suggest that, as logical and compelling as the case for task relief may sound, its benefits are not easily forthcoming. Unless the professional and the paraprofessional are prepared in advance and a formal redefinition of roles is worked out, the result is likely to be unsatisfactory for both.

The only study we found that dealt with task relief in operation (reduction in MSW caseload) and examined its working over a period of time was one by Adelson and Kovner (1969). The study covered the utilization of a group of low-income residents who were put to work as social health technicians in a large urban hospital setting. Their tasks were fairly specific, involving the gathering of information and helping clients to meet concrete needs under the supervision of social workers.[87] Their contribution to the handling of caseloads is depicted in Table 10.

The table traces the change in the number of cases carried by professionals over a period of more than two years. The average number of cases per professional social worker was 53 before the introduction of paraprofessionals and fell to 38 by the time the training program ended. The initial rise (to 76) was probably the result of the trainees' discovery of people who needed service but had previously escaped notice. What was most interesting was that while the professional staff doubled during the 2-year period, professionals and technicians were able to handle almost four times the caseload they carried at the inception of the program.

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[86] This same phenomenon has been mentioned quite frequently in connection with the separation of services from payments. Such separation does not automatically free a segment of staff to provide service.

[87] For example, the paraprofessional might serve as a translator during an interview, escort a client from service to service within the hospital or from agency to agency, and serve as a client advocate in the client's dealings with those agencies that provide public assistance, housing, and other services. At first the paraprofessional was viewed as an auxiliary or helper to the professional. As the graduate of the program became part of the social services staff, however, he assumed total responsibility for the more routine problems, and shared responsibility with the professional for the more complex ones. Thus, each social work team (professional and technician) was able to spend more time per case with those patients who required nonroutine treatment.

Table 10

Average and Total Caseload for Professionals (MSWs) and Social Health Technicians

Date	*Number of MSWs*	*Cases per MSW*	*Number of trainees and/or technicians*	*Cases per trainee and/or technician*	*Total monthly social service caseload*
April 1966	4	53	—	—	212
October 1966	7	52	20	6	484
April 1967	7	76	20	6	652
October 1967	9	63	4	28	679
April 1968	6	45	14	22	578
October 1968	9	38	13	37	823

Increasing the Effectiveness of Service

The Adelson and Kovner data clearly indicate an increase in efficiency of operation. One might assume that service impact (as measured by changes in the functioning of clients) was also enhanced, although the data are not clearly stated.

Many claims were found in the literature about the extent to which paraprofessional utilization can bring about marked and profound changes in the lives of clients. These claims may be accurate but are extremely difficult to evaluate. Much of the evidence presented was anecdotal and couched in the form of personal testimony. Criteria on which the judgments were predicated were rarely specified, and the data on which the analyses were based were either incomplete or not given at all.[88]

Cost effectiveness of paraprofessional utilization was seldom mentioned and even less frequently analyzed. One of the earliest demonstration projects to use paraprofessionals was carried out by the Arkansas Rehabilitation Service (1961). Although it involved only a few staff members and limited the role of the paraprofessional, it was carefully executed and could well serve as a model for program evaluation designs. The principal objective of the program was task relief—to relieve counselors of non-counseling tasks. The study compared two counselors whose methods of operation remained the same as they were prior to the project (the control group), and two counselors who functioned as part of a rehabilitation team with a variety of specialists, including counselor aides (the experimental group). In the experimental group the counselors were relieved of all duties except counseling and caseload management. The performance of the two groups was compared over time on a variety of criteria: total number of individuals served; number of severely disabled individuals served; number of individuals trained in OJT; number of individuals placed in direct employment.

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[88] In one instance we analyzed data that had been gathered to support claims of paraprofessional effectiveness, but found no statistical justification for the claims.

The findings of the study were extremely interesting. There was no significant difference in the total number of persons served by the two groups. There was no advantage with either group in the total number of case closures.[89] But there were striking differences in the quality of services produced. In working with the severely disabled, the experimental group had a 2-to-1 advantage in numbers of clients served and a 2½-to-1 advantage in number of closures rehabilitated. Persons served by the experimental group had a 40 percent better chance of retaining employment and had "substantial advantages in relation to wages, increases in wages, job retention, and promotions" (page 64).

The cost of such service was also evaluated. Personnel costs (salaries and travel expenses) in the experimental group were higher than in the control group (11 percent for referrals, 18 percent for those accepted for service, 16 percent for rehabilitation plan, and 23 percent for employed closures). On the other hand, service costs (cost of purchased services) in the experimental group were lower (11 percent for referrals, 4 percent for service acceptance, 6 percent for plan preparation). Service costs were the same for the two groups in working with employed closures. The overall cost of using the experimental group was slightly less than 10 percent higher.

Paraprofessional utilization, when looked at from the standpoint of cost alone, may not necessarily be cheaper. Furthermore, traditional short-term measures of output or productivity may not reflect the gains made by such a program. As the Arkansas data indicated, it is the long-term cost/effectiveness ratio that may eventually be significant. The usual cross-sectional studies, using superficial or ambiguous criteria of effectiveness, will not be sensitive to this kind of impact. Unfortunately, because of the design of the Arkansas study, it is not possible to isolate the contribution of the paraprofessionals to the gains described. Despite this shortcoming, the study should be examined by anyone interested in program evaluation.

More recent work by Truax (1967) has investigated the impact of paraprofessionals as supporting staff to the rehabilitation counselors. He compared the work of counselors and counselor aides under the following conditions: counselors working alone in the traditional manner; a counselor assisted by a counselor aide under close supervision; a counselor aide who functioned, under daily supervision, as a counselor. Clients were randomly assigned and caseload size and difficulty were controlled.

Performance was evaluated according to a range of criteria (e.g., client work production, cooperativeness, work attitude, work quality, and overall progress in the course of training). According to Truax, the best results were obtained by aides working alone under the daily supervision of professional counselors. On certain client variables (e.g., overall progress) the professional counselor did better when the number of cases was low while the aide did better when the number of cases was high.

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[89] This is a fairly typical production index in many SWRS agencies.

1.

This study, like the previous one, suggests that service gains from the use of paraprofessionals are far from uniform and universal. The findings are based on very small samples and have not been replicated. Additional systematic data are required to determine which tasks, under what conditions, and in which work settings, paraprofessionals can best perform. The work of Truax and others indicates that questions about the effectiveness and impact of paraprofessionals on service can be submitted to controlled research.

PROFESSIONAL AND PARAPROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The literature reveals little systematic information about the ways in which professionals and paraprofessionals accommodate to one another in an organizational setting. We found no longitudinal studies of this mutual adjustment process, nor any psychometric data in the literature. In this section we shall speculate on some of the dynamics that may be involved, incorporating the empirical studies that relate to the process.

One way to view the process of mutual adaptation is as if it were an "approach-avoidance" situation, that is, to assume that each party will see definite advantages and disadvantages to having the other around.[90] The professional enjoys superior status and the presence of the paraprofessional enhances it. Recognizing that the paraprofessional may look to him for guidance, he is conscious of an added responsibility and may develop anxieties as to whether or not he can live up to these expectations. He may want some relief from his duties, and may be eager to see the paraprofessional take on more responsibility and develop his skills. By the same token, as Denham and Shatz (1969) pointed out, he may be reluctant to surrender the structure of his accustomed duties, and, by giving the paraprofessional some independence, to narrow the gap in status between them.

The paraprofessional may have similar hesitations. If his responsibilities grow, he may welcome the added opportunities for development. But he may be frustrated because, no matter how much he acts like a professional, he is likely to find his remuneration and status unchanged. Denham and Shatz (1969) pointed out that he will quite often look to the professional for help and guidance. Most of the time he will want concrete assistance. If the professional does not respond in the way the paraprofessional expects him to, frustrations can result.

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[90] In formulating these propositions we are drawing heavily on the writing and thinking of Gannon (1968), Hallowitz and Riessman (1966), and Levinson and Schiller (1965).

Little empirical work has been done on attitude change of professionals or paraprofessionals as a result of their shared experiences. Available studies do provide insights into changes that may take place, however. With respect to how professionals and paraprofessionals perceive one another, it seems that each group initially has stereotypic images of the other. Exposure tends to increase an awareness of individual differences. Grosser's (1966) data on how professionals perceived their clients revealed that clients were perceived to be far more homogeneous than they actually were. Birnbaum and Jones (1967) indicated that professional staff had formed images of the paraprofessionals based on generalizations made from reading about the poor. These images were modified through exposure to the paraprofessional. By the same token, although there is little evidence from research, paraprofessionals may initially approach professionals with feelings of awe or hostility.

There is little doubt that a person's employment as a paraprofessional has an impact on his attitudes. The direction and magnitude of the changes that take place vary with each situation, so that few generalizations are warranted at this time. Some of the findings are predictable. For example, Brecher, et al. (1968) indicated that women paraprofessionals derived a great deal of social and emotional satisfaction from their involvement in a work experience program. This, coupled with heightened self-awareness and insight, is often mentioned.

Gannon (1968), studying 55 paraprofessionals in the Harlem Domestic Peace Corps, found that though they gained insight into themselves and a better awareness of their community's problems, many reported a loss of faith in the ability of the individual to deal with those problems. More than a third of the group felt less inclined than previously to favor democratic principles in dealing with community groups. This finding was similar to that of Grosser (1966), who found that the staff, both professional and indigenous, felt that the community was a worse place to live in, its schools were poorer, and the life chances of its people were more hopeless than did the residents themselves. Taken together, these two findings suggest a hypothesis which warrants testing. Broader awareness of community problems, exposure to a staff with more pessimistic or more realistic expectations about social realities, and a knowledge of agency secrets and foibles can have unintended detrimental consequences for some paraprofessionals. Gannon says:

> It is difficult to know at this point whether this last response represents an overly simplified reaction to a new-found leadership role or a serious tendency toward radicalism. (page 358)

SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

The published and unpublished material relating to the impacts and consequences of paraprofessional utilization tends to be highly impressionistic, with little descriptive material about the context within which utilization takes place. As a result, generalizations from such data need to be made with care.

Paraprofessionalism is serving a variety of purposes. The evidence indicates that it is playing a role in reducing unemployment. Survey data show that paraprofessionals drawn from the ranks of the unemployed are able to improve their economic condition substantially.

The evidence for its success in increasing service efficiency through task relief is mixed. Limited data are available to show that paraprofessionals given specific duties and responsibilities can substantially reduce the caseload of the professional. On the other hand, data from several sources show that these task relief benefits do not occur automatically. Professionals freed from repetitive, routine tasks may be at a loss to know how to use their time without special training and re-orientation.

The data for the movement's impact on service effectiveness are most in need of rigorous investigation. It is here that partisan testimony prevails. The few studies done suggest that the use of paraprofessionals can be more expensive in the short run, but may contribute to substantial client gains that become apparent only with the passage of time.

Research on attitude change resists summary. It is based on fragmented studies of very limited constructs. In general, both the professional and the paraprofessional appear to benefit from exposure to one another and to modify the stereotyped images they held previously. There is some preliminary evidence that the paraprofessional experience might produce unintended consequences, such as pessimistic appraisals of the client's ability to change the conditions of his life. It is far too early to speculate on this possibility, but it is important to keep in mind that exposure to the workings of social systems, warts and all, can be an unsettling experience. Most writers have emphasized the possible benefits; the risks should also be discussed with candor.

CHAPTER 7

FIELD METHODOLOGY

SUMMARY

Based on the conceptual framework of this project and the literature in this field, the following data collection instruments were developed and used in a preliminary field test:

- *Personal History Inventory (PHI) - a self-report questionnaire designed to gather biographical and demographical information about the paraprofessional worker.*
- *Worker Orientation Survey (WOS) - a self-report questionnaire requiring respondents to answer Likert-scale items concerning attitudes and opinions about their jobs, their agency, and the clients with whom they work.*
- *Job Analysis Survey (JAS) - a self-report questionnaire seeking information about time spent in various activities; the discretion exercised in performing them; how satisfying they were; and whom the respondent came into contact with in performing them.*
- *Interview Schedule for Paraprofessionals (ISPP) - a structured interview schedule applied to a group of paraprofessional respondents asking about their reasons for seeking employment, perceptions of agency personnel and policies, and future plans.*
- *Interview Schedule for Professionals (ISP) - a structured interview schedule administered individually to professionals. This sought information about the decision to employ paraprofessionals; perceptions of the relationship of paraprofessionals to professionals, clients, and the agency; reaction of agency staff to paraprofessionals; and agency methods for the assimilation and utilization of these workers.*

During the field test data were collected from 20 professionals and 57 paraprofessional workers in six agencies that differed in location, administration, and structure. These data must be considered illustrative but not indicative.

PURPOSES OF FIELD INVESTIGATION

The field investigation had two purposes: to develop and pretest data collection instruments to be used at a later time for more intensive field investigations; and to collect preliminary information about paraprofessional workers to clarify some of the concepts discussed in the literature. Since this information has come from a few respondents in a limited number of settings, any generalizations drawn from it should be regarded as suggestive.

The field investigation, based on the conceptual framework for this project (see Figure 1), included the development of instruments to collect data in 10 content areas:

- types of paraprofessional workers;
- forces and pressures on the organization to employ paraprofessionals;
- organization motives and goals for use of paraprofessionals;
- expectations and sets of organizations in hiring paraprofessionals;
- patterns of assimilation of paraprofessionals;
- patterns of utilization of paraprofessionals;
- forces and pressures operating on paraprofessionals;
- motives and goals of paraprofessionals;
- expectancies and sets of paraprofessionals;
- consequences of employment for paraprofessionals and the organization.

Five data collection instruments were developed: three self-report questionnaires and two interview schedules. These will be described briefly in the following section.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Personal History Inventory (PHI)

One of the objectives of the field work was to develop a rationale and methodology for depicting various types of paraprofessional workers employed in SWRS organizations. Typologies can be constructed in many ways. One that seems promising makes use of current and antecedent life history information (biodata) to place people in homogeneous subgroups based on age, sex, race, cultural background, level and type of education, occupational history, etc. Besides offering a promising area of psychological research, the use of biodata would be consistent with the legislative and administrative emphasis documented in Chapters 2, 3, and 5. Subgrouping would have a descriptive value and the subgroups could be related to data obtained from other instruments (e.g., job utilization, role expectations, job satisfaction).

With these considerations in mind, the Personal History Inventory (PHI) was constructed. It is based on 103 items drawn from both paraprofessional and social science measurement literature. The content areas and illustrative items are shown in Table 11.

Worker Orientation Survey (WOS)

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) contains terms such as motives, goals, expectations, forces, pressures, attitudes, and sets. Although the specific meanings of these terms vary considerably, they suggest the variety of motor forces which bring the paraprofessional to the employing organization and influence his view of the work situation. We shall call the confluence of these elements in a point of view the paraprofessional brings to the job his "orientation."

The Worker Orientation Survey (WOS) was developed to describe some of these elements. Relevant concept variables from the literature and our own thinking were transformed into content elements and then set down as items in a self-report instrument. The instrument was intended to yield clusters of items, useful in describing workers and determining relationships, if any, to differences in background (as indicated, perhaps, by biodata subgroups) or differences in utilization and work activity.

Three basic types of items were developed for this instrument: items referring to problems that paraprofessionals, or any group of workers, might encounter on their jobs; items referring to paraprofessionals' perceptions of various aspects of their jobs, their clients, and the employing agencies; and items referring to job satisfaction. Respondents answered each item by checking one of six alternatives ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Table 12 contains a listing of the content areas used in the WOS and examples of the 114 items.

Table 11

Content Areas and Examples of Biographical Items in the Personal History Inventory (PHI)

Content Areas	*Biographical Items*
I. Basic Demographic Characteristics	Age
	Sex
	Race
	Religion

Table 11 (continued)

	Content Areas	*Biographical Items*
II.	Past Family History	Happiness in family home
	A. Parental relationships	Discussions with parents
	B. Parental education	Education of father
	C. Career as a client	Nature of father's work
		Education of mother
		Kind and frequency of financial assistance received
		Participation in training programs (NYC, MDTA, WIN)
III.	Geographic Mobility	Number of times family moved until respondent was 18 years old
		Number of times moved in last 5 years
		Last move closer to or away from co-workers
		Last move closer to or away from clients
IV.	Previous Employment	Number of years in part-time jobs while in school
		Age at first full-time job
		Number of months without a job in last 5 years
		Number of weeks without a job in past year
V.	Educational Status	Years of education
		Courses taken in preparation for a particular job
VI.	Present Family History	Present marital status
	A. Marital status	Age when first married

Table 11 (continued)

Content Areas	*Biographical Items*
B. Family members	Types and number of people living with respondent
C. Socio-economic status	Number and ages of children
D. Career as a client	Spouse currently working or not
	Total money family gets to live on
	Kind and frequency of assistance received
	Participation in training programs (NYC, MDTA, WIN)
VII. Health	Working time lost last year because of illness
	Current health problems
VIII. Attitudes Toward Present Employment	Problems brought home from work
	Expectations to do well on current job
IX. Relationships with People	Frequency with which people ask for respondent's advice
A. Co-workers	Frequency of social contact with co-workers
B. Others	Enjoyment in talking with unfamiliar people
	Frequency of trying to persuade others to see your point of view

Table 12

Content Areas and Items in the Worker Orientation Survey (WOS)

Content	*Sample Items*
I. Agency	
A. Objectives	The staff in this agency really talks a lot but doesn't take much action.
B. Prescription—Discretion	Rules, policies, and procedures in this agency rarely keep me from doing what I think needs to be done for the client.
C. Interpersonal Relationships	The staff in this agency is too hung up or concerned with professional status and qualifications.
	Relationships between people in this agency are friendly.
D. Support-Communications	If I feel I have to "rock the boat" in order to get my job done, I can expect my agency to back me up.
E. Personnel Practices: Promotion	The job I am working in now is a dead end with no place to go.
	There are many chances for promotion in this agency for people with my kind of job.
Hiring	There is very little racial discrimination in hiring people in this agency.
	Whenever possible, this agency tries to hire workers at my level who can really understand clients and can talk with them.
Pay	In my kind of job there is a good relationship between how much you get paid and how much you help the clients.
	People in this agency who decide what pay paraprofessionals get don't know what paraprofessional workers really do.
Job Security	I don't have to worry about losing my job because of funds to the agency being cut off.
	I'm not sure from one day to the next whether I'll have my job, because if I make a mistake I could lose it.
F. Agency-Community Relationships	No social services agency can really solve the problems of this community.
	I work for an agency that has not been accepted by the clients.

Table 12 (continued)

Content Areas	*Sample Items*
II. Client	Unless you have a lot of education most clients think you can't help them.
	You've got to get to know a client personally before you can really help him.
	Clients will try to take advantage of you if you get too friendly with them.
	The friends and family of my clients aren't afraid to give me information because they trust me.
	You can't really understand a client's problems unless you've had the same problems yourself.
III. Job	
A. Training	The training I received for this job has been quite helpful in carrying out my duties.
	The kinds of things I learned in training for this job are not related to my actual duties.
B. Ability Utilization	My job seems to be made up mainly of those things that the workers above me don't want to do themselves.
	I am working in a job that makes the best use of my abilities.
C. Supervisor Relationships	I know how my supervisor judges my performance.
	Once in a while my supervisor and I will get together and talk about how I am doing on my job.
D. Job Pressure	So many demands are placed on me that it's often hard to get everything done.
	I have so many job responsibilities that it's hard for me to do my best work.
E. Role Conflict	When I was hired I was told I would be able to make changes, but I'm really expected to stick to the system.
	I feel like I have sold out myself and my friends to work for this agency.
F. Worker Discretion	I can decide what I do on my job.
	I have enough authority to carry out my duties.

Table 12 (continued)

Content Areas	*Sample Items*
G. Job Satisfaction	In my present job I am satisfied with:
	the chances for doing what I think is worthwhile;
	the chances for advancement from this job to another;
	the chance to learn new skills;
	the freedom to use my own judgment;
	the chance to do something that makes use of my abilities;
	getting good pay.

Job Analysis Survey (JAS)

An important set of variables depicted in the conceptual framework (Figure 1) have to do with the utilization of the workers under investigation. It was recognized that the elements which constitute patterns of utilization would be critical situational variables in that they might reflect the role expectations of the organizations employing the paraprofessional, shed light on the workers' own perceptions of their roles, and help to interpret and explain data dealing with satisfaction, turnover, adjustment, and other personnel and organizational phenomena.

It was not feasible to carry out a detailed task analysis of paraprofessional jobs. Instead a limited analysis of worker functions was made on clusters of tasks, areas of discretion, levels of discretion, allocations of time and effort, and specificity and clarity of standards. The instrument used to collect data for this analysis was the Job Analysis Survey (JAS).

The most difficult problem in constructing the JAS was formulating questions about task content. The problem was to strike a balance between the range of tasks to be included (comprehensiveness) and the level of detail (specificity) in the descriptions. Assuming that the data would have to be collected within quite limited time periods, it did not seem likely that we could get both comprehensive coverage and detailed description of job activities. The result was a compromise. Twenty-six task clusters were developed to describe the major types of activities workers in SWRS agencies might be called upon to perform. Respondents were asked to indicate the approximate number of hours they spent each week in performing the activities described in each of the clusters. For each task on which at least one hour a week was spent, the respondents answered questions about the amount of discretion permitted in the task, how much it helped the client, its importance to the agency, the satisfaction derived from it, and the difficulty experienced in doing it. Respondents were to use five-point Likert scales in answering these questions. Table 13 contains the 26 task clusters developed for the JAS.

Interview Schedule for Paraprofessionals (ISPP)

It was decided that an interview format would be necessary to obtain adequate information in the following areas: forces and pressures operating on paraprofessionals; motives and goals of paraprofessionals; expectations and sets of paraprofessionals; patterns of assimilation of paraprofessionals; and consequences of employment for paraprofessionals, professionals, and the organization. Partial information was obtained through some of the other instruments, especially the WOS, but complete coverage necessitated interviewing workers because of the complexities of these content areas.

Little previous research on the motivation, attitudes, and values of paraprofessional workers before or after employment had been reported in the literature. Without such previous work for guidance, the development of self-report questions was not feasible. It seemed feasible to ask broad questions in these content areas and, using the answers of respondents, to probe further for information. This could best be accomplished through interviews. Furthermore, considering the complexity of the concepts and the poor language and reading skills of many of the paraprofessionals, an interview in which questions could be asked orally and concepts fully explained seemed more appropriate. Also, since answers would be complex and lengthy, an interview would allow respondents to express themselves fully and easily.

Questions for the interview schedule were developed from the conceptual framework of this study and from the output of a companion project being carried out by New York University. The New York University work (Katzell, et al., 1971) identified three types of mobility relevant to this study.

The first type, initial entry, related to the two content areas of forces and pressures operating on paraprofessionals, and motives and goals of paraprofessionals. NYU's findings indicated that initial entry behavior is a function of:

- the effective goal-system, or the goals which an individual attempts to implement in his job choices;
- the perceived and actual availability of effective goal satisfaction in a given occupational field and/or agency;
- the perceived and actual availability of jobs in a given occupational field and/or agency; and
- the demographic characteristics of a person which may alter the amount of opportunity for him in the field, and/or which may influence his choice of job.

Table 13

Major Task Clusters in the Job Analysis Survey (JAS)

1. Going out of the agency and into the community to try to find people who need services.

2. Telling clients about the programs, services, and kinds of help your agency can give them.

3. Giving clients advice about their problems and helping them plan and make decisions. (For example, about their family, jobs, or money.)

4. Getting information from clients through interviews to find out the kinds of needs and problems they have.

5. Referring clients who need help to your agency or other agencies and following them up to make sure they get the help they need.

6. Finding resources and sources of help for clients. (For example, finding people who will give furniture, clothing, food, medicine, or money to clients, finding foster homes, finding day care facilities, finding jobs for clients.)

7. Doing homemaking and housekeeping tasks for clients. (For example, cleaning house, cooking, buying groceries.)

8. Giving nursing and medical care. (For example, giving first aid, giving medicines.)

9. Giving personal care. (For example, helping people with grooming, giving people comfort.)

10. Going with clients or taking clients to places where they can get help. (For example, taking clients or driving clients to places where they need to go.)

11. Teaching clients how to do things for themselves. (For example, how to cook, sew, fix things around the house, take care of other members of the family.)

12. Teaching workers their jobs. (For example, telling workers about their jobs, showing workers how to fill out forms or records, telling workers about agency rules and procedures, teaching workers their job skills.)

13. Helping your agency to better understand the problems of the clients and community. (For example, giving advice to supervisors, giving information to co-workers.)

14. Doing maintenance tasks in the agency. (For example, cleaning, making repairs.)

15. Carrying out clerical tasks or paperwork. (For example, filling out forms or requisitions, filing, typing, dictating.)

16. Administering tests and examinations to clients. (For example, personality tests, physical examinations, or job preference tests.)

Table 13 (continued)

17. Interpreting test and examination findings of clients. (For example, from personality tests, physical examinations, or job preference tests.)

18. Helping to get people to do something about problems in the community. (For example, organizing a group of clients, getting PTA or church groups to give money, people, or space, getting business people involved in social services.)

19. Trying to get rules, laws, policies, or practices changed when they keep clients from getting the help and services they need.

20. Making speeches or giving talks to different groups of people in the community about your agency or about problems in the community. (For example, talking to PTA, Jaycees, church clubs, high school classes.)

21. Planning agency programs or projects that have to do either with the community, clients, or workers. (For example, planning a hot meal program for children, planning a training program for new workers.)

22. Deciding if a client is eligible to receive services from your agency. (For example, reviewing and checking out declarations.)

23. Helping your agency decide if a program or project dealing with the community, clients, or workers is successful or not.

24. Supervising other workers. (For example, assigning workers to clients, making out work schedules for others, telling others what to do, deciding how well they do their job.)

25. Carrying out tasks that have to do with the money matters of the agency. (For example, buying supplies, raising money for the agency, keeping track of costs of the agency, making up budgets.)

26. Carrying out tasks that have to do with the staffing of the agency. (For example, finding people to work, hiring and firing people, deciding which types of people to hire, promoting people.)

By identifying perceived and actual goals and perceived and actual availability of jobs as prime determinants of entry into an organization, this work formed the base for development of items for the two previously mentioned content areas.

A second form of mobility, job turnover, was classified as a consequence of employment. By identifying this as a major problem in the social services field and discussing some contributing factors to turnover, such as unrealistic expectations regarding goal attainment, lack of opportunity for promotion, poor supervision, and lack of clarity of goals, this work also became a basis for item formulation.

The third form of mobility identified by the NYU study was internal mobility. Questions on internal mobility, especially upward moves within the organization, were included in the ISPP. Table 14 listed the questions used in the interview schedule and the content areas of the conceptual framework to which they were judged to relate.

Table 14
Content Areas and Items in the Interview Schedule for Paraprofessionals (ISPP)

Content Areas	*Items*
I. Types of Paraprofessional Workers	What was the title of the job you had just before you got a job with this agency?
	How long did you hold that job?
II. Patterns of Assimilation	What was the title of the first job you held in this agency?
	How did you find out about the opening that led to your first job with this agency?
	Did you take any tests or have any interviews when you applied for a job with this agency?
	How long after you made application for this job were you hired? How were you notified of your selection?
	Did you have any meetings after you were hired to explain the agency's purpose, organization, and workings?
	Tell me about the training that you've had since coming with this agency.
III. Forces and Pressures on Workers and Worker Motives and Goals	What was the title of the job you had just before you got a job with this agency?
	How long did you hold that job?
	What were the main reasons you took this job?
	Has your job met these hopes (reasons) and helped you to carry out your purposes?
IV. Expectations and Sets of Workers	How did you find out about the opening that led to your first job with this agency?
	Does your job seem to be the same now as it was described to you when you were applying? If not, in which ways is it different?
	If you were promoted, what would be the next job up?
	What is the job two steps away from your present job?
	In your own words, how would you describe the purposes of this agency? How do you know this?
	Who makes decisions on promotions and raises?
	Have you ever had a discussion with your supervisor about how you're doing on your job?

Table 14 (continued)

Content Areas	*Items*
	When? (Regularly, infrequently, etc.) Do you know what he thinks you should do?
V. Consequences of Employment	Whom do you usually come in contact with in the agency?
	How do you feel about your interactions with these people?
	Has your job met your hopes (reasons for taking the job) and helped you to carry out your purposes?
	Have you made any plans about your future in the agency?
	Have you made any similar plans for work outside this agency?
VI. Knowledge of the Agency	How does this agency or project get its money?
	How large is this agency?

Interview Schedule for Professionals (ISP)

A structured interview to be used with professionals in the organization was developed to seek information about areas in the conceptual framework pertinent to organization policy or decision making. The interview format was adopted for two of the same reasons it was used with paraprofessional workers, namely, the complexity of the topics discussed and the need for interaction between the respondent and the data gatherer.

Content areas in the ISP were: forces and pressures on organizations to employ paraprofessionals; motives and goals for worker utilization; and patterns of utilization of paraprofessionals. Two content areas in the interview for paraprofessionals were also covered in the interviews with professionals: patterns of assimilation of paraprofessionals; and consequences of employment.

For one area—expectancies and set of organizations—a self-report questionnaire was used.

The questions for the interview schedule were developed from the conceptual framework and work carried out by a companion project at Manpower Science Services, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1971), (see Table 15).

Some of the questions could not be answered by all professionals interviewed. A few asked for information that may have been accessible only to certain individuals within the organization. Some questions were not relevant to the work of the particular respondents or were not within their own knowledge or experience. It was felt, however, that information in all content areas could best be obtained by interviewing a number of professionals in each setting.

Items to measure the content area of expectancies and sets of organizations were taken from a series of multiple-choice questions developed by the Michigan project. Because of time constraints only 15 of the items recommended by the Michigan group could be used. They were selected to measure impersonal-personal relationships; separation of policy and administrative decisions; a priori rights and duties; merit; organization-community linkages; interorganizational linkages; and organizational climate.

The content coverage of the field investigation was rather extensive. Table 16 lists the 10 content areas derived from the conceptual framework and the instruments, often used in combination, to elicit information about each area. Since this was a preliminary investigation primarily intended to pre-test and develop data collection tools, the instruments evolved in both content and format and did not always yield complete data for all respondents or sites.

Table 15

Content Areas and Items in the Interview Schedule for Professionals (ISP)

Content Areas	*Items*
I. Forces and Pressures on Organization	What events preceded or led to the decision to employ paraprofessionals?
II. Motives and Goals for Worker Utilization	What objectives were paraprofessionals hired to achieve? Have the purposes or duties of the paraprofessionals changed since they were introduced into the agency?
III. Assimilation Policies and Practices	What was the process by which paraprofessionals were introduced to the agency? How were they: —recruited —selected —inducted —trained —counseled —evaluated on performance —given promotion opportunities
IV. Patterns of Utilization	Have the purposes or duties of the paraprofessionals changed since they were introduced into the agency? Do paraprofessionals participate in decision making on: —agency operation

Table 15 (continued)

Content Areas	*Items*
	—agency policy —dealing with clients
V. Consequences of Employment	How do you feel the use of paraprofessionals has thus far affected their: —ability to solve problems of clients —relationship with professionals --ability to understand the workings of the organization Are work problems of paraprofessionals different from those of the other personnel in the organization?

Table 16

Coverage of Content Elements by Data Collection Instruments

Content Elements	*PHI*	*WOS*	*JAS*	*ISPP*	*ISP*
1. Types of Paraprofessional Workers	X	X	X	X	
2. Forces and Pressures on Organizations					X
3. Motives and Goals for Paraprofessional Utilization					X
4. Expectations and Sets of Organizations					X
5. Patterns of Assimilation				X	X
6. Patterns of Utilization			X		
7. Forces and Pressures on Paraprofessionals		X		X	
8. Paraprofessional Motives and Goals	X	X		X	
9. Paraprofessional Expectations and Sets		X		X	
10. Consequences of Employment		X	X	X	X

SAMPLING AND LOGISTICS OF DATA COLLECTION

Within the constraints of a data collection instrument objective for the field investigation, it was not possible to choose either agencies or respondents to be representative. Instead, a sampling plan for a limited field investigation was developed to achieve some geographical and administrative diversity. By this method we hoped to include some of the extremes of people and agencies that would be used in later research.

Six agencies in different regions of the country were selected: two in the far west; three in the south and southeast; and one in the northeast. Two of the sites were new demonstration projects supported by state and federal funds, one was a long-established city agency, and three were private non-profit corporations. Three had staffs of 100 or more employees and three had staffs of 30 or less. The agencies also varied in the sizes of the communities they served: two were in urban centers of at least 500,000 people; two were in urban centers of fewer than 150,000 people; and two were in communities of approximately 20,000 people.

In all six agencies initial contact was made with high-level administrators, to whom the project was explained and requests for the appropriate personnel were directed. Several conversations with each agency took place before final details were worked out.

The number of paraprofessionals sampled in each agency varied from four to 15, depending upon the number employed and their availability on the days of data collection. The number of professionals sampled in each agency was between three and five. They were either closely associated with the paraprofessionals (e.g., supervisors and trainers) or responsible for agency decisions (e.g., agency directors whenever possible).

Paraprofessionals were assembled in groups of four to seven people to be interviewed, and each session required approximately three hours. A total of 57 respondents were given the PHI, the WOS, the JAS, and the ISPP.

Professionals were interviewed individually or in groups of two, each session usually lasting from one to one-and-one-half hours. A total of 18 respondents were given the PHI, the WOS, the JAS, and the ISP.

Developing and testing the various data collection instruments helped:

- to relate the literature and the conceptual framework to empirical findings, however limited in scope;
- to give the project staff an indication of how the instruments work in the actual data collection situation, and an idea of the logistical problems encountered in the field; and
- to produce some impressions of the dynamics of paraprofessional utilization.

These impressions will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. They must be interpreted with considerable caution since they are based on a small non-representative sample of respondents who were responding to instruments and interview schedules that were still being tested.

CHAPTER 8

INTEGRATION OF FIELD FINDINGS

SUMMARY

Results discussed in this chapter are highly tentative, based on very small non-representative numbers of respondents and instruments in various stages of completeness. Findings should be interpreted as illustrative and extremely speculative.

Discussions with agency personnel uncovered almost the full range of forces and motives discussed in the literature. Various agencies were concerned with one or more of the following: solving the manpower shortage in the SWRS field; providing employment to the poor; increasing the effectiveness of social delivery systems; increasing the efficiency of social delivery systems.

Demographically, the 57 paraprofessionals interviewed were found to be predominantly black, female, between 20 and 30 years old, and possessing a high school degree. Parents were characterized as having had little formal education, as performing semi-skilled work, but as having received very little financial or social assistance. Previous employment patterns indicated a stable work history. Taking into account all family wage earners, most of the sample were above the poverty level.

In their orientation toward people in general, paraprofessionals commonly indicated that they enjoyed talking with people they did not know, frequently gave advice to people, and often tried to straighten things out when someone hurt them.

Regarding clients, the paraprofessionals felt they did not need to have a lot of education or the same problems as the clients in order to help them. What was important was the willingness to try to help peope in trouble.

The process of determining task activities for paraprofessionals is influenced by many variables other than those inherent in a logical framework of manpower utilization. At present, task activities are not necessarily related to stated organizational motives.

Six main patterns of utilization were observed: outreach worker; bridge agent; transportation aide; administrative aide; homemaking aide; clerical worker. Little consensus was reported concerning the amount of discretion exercised in job activities. Apparently this varied from individual to individual.

Most paraprofessionals were neither the hard-core unemployed nor previously employed in social service work. Typically, they had heard of their present job through traditional sources, such as the employment office, the agency itself, or job training counselors.

Nearly all paraprofessionals had undergone at least one interview as a selection device. No written tests were administered. Criteria were ability to project warm relationships, verbal skills, and poise.

Paraprofessional motives for seeking positions in the agencies were a mixture of self-interest and an interest in service.

Most agencies had an orientation and training program lasting 2 to 3 months. This was usually a combination of classroom and field work.

Information was sought on the adaptation of the agency and the paraprofessional to one another.

Ease of adaptation seemed to correlate with agency size, with smaller agencies having a positive development of events. Workers in large agencies indicated that friction had occurred and the process had been difficult.

Regarding impact on the professional's roles and duties, agency size was again a correlate with some restructuring of the activities of these workers in small agencies.

Training of the professional staff in the roles and duties of paraprofessionals also facilitates adaptation.

It was the consensus of professionals that utilization of paraprofessionals had a positive effect upon clients, both in terms of service delivery and affective relationships between the client and the community.

This chapter summarizes in six sections the results of our field investigation: antecedents and motives of paraprofessional employment; types of workers; orientations of paraprofessionals and professionals; patterns of worker utilization; assimilation of workers into organizations; and consequences of paraprofessional employment. Since the construction of the instruments for data collection was based, in part, on information derived from the literature, there are, not surprisingly, some similarities between the literature and the impressions gained from the field.

ANTECEDENTS AND MOTIVES OF PARAPROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Chapter 2 discussed the paraprofessional movement as a complex phenomenon answering the needs of a varied array of interests and set in motion by diverse forces. These forces in turn led to five major motives for the employment of paraprofessionals: solving the manpower shortage in the social service field; providing employment to the poor; increasing the efficiency of service delivery systems; increasing the effectiveness of service delivery systems; and providing a therapeutic work experience.

Findings from the limited field investigation seem compatible with all these themes. In discussions with personnel from four agencies, we uncovered almost the full range of antecedent forces and worker motives described in the literature.

Professionals from these agencies were asked to trace the antecedents of their agency's decision to employ paraprofessionals.[91] Following this introduction, they were asked several questions to clarify or expand the information they had given. In agencies where there was only one informant with enough length of service to have first-hand knowledge of such antecedents, we had no way of comparing the information given with the responses of other informants.

In one of the four agencies, hiring welfare recipients was the primary concern. A WIN program had been initiated in the area, and the city administration decided to employ a large percentage of the first group of participants, believing this would serve as an example to other organizations in the area. In all, 30 participants were selected for the city-sponsored training program. All but one of these, who terminated for personal reasons, were hired by two city agencies. Subsequently, another group of WIN participants was employed by two other city agencies. According to the informants, there were no other factors in this decision (e.g., external pressure from the federal level or the community, or internal pressure from professional staff members, to change their job responsibilities).

Another agency was an OEO-funded operation, and respondents there stated that the employment of paraprofessionals was in line with the provisions of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and its subsequent amendments. Paraprofessionals had been part of the agency work force since its inception, and had been hired with the idea that they would rise in the organization as their work skills developed.

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[91] This area of questioning was developed after the field investigation was underway. Consequently, we do not have data on all six organizations.

The other two agencies indicated that a variety of factors had influenced their decision to employ paraprofessionals. In both cases there had been internal pressure from professionals, who complained they were spending a great deal of their time in activities requiring considerably less skill than they possessed. Associated with the complaints were reports of a high turnover, especially among the caseworkers, and low morale among those workers remaining on the job. One agency, a state public welfare organization, reported pressure from the state and federal governments to employ paraprofessional workers in all agencies dispensing public assistance. At the same time, social welfare personnel in the state were becoming aware of the reported benefits of using paraprofessional workers. These reports aroused great interest at high levels within the organization.

The professionals in the fourth agency indicated that, in addition to these forces, the need to develop communication between the community and the agency was a factor. The paraprofessional was intended to be a bridge; he would disseminate agency information in the community and communicate the client's viewpoint to the agency. This function would be facilitated if the paraprofessional made initial contact with each client.

The four agencies seemed to be moved by several motives and forces stemming from both internal and external pressures.

TYPES OF WORKERS

Earlier chapters have made the point that typologies of paraprofessional workers can be described in terms of biodata characteristics. The number of respondents is too small to test this hypothesis, but this section of the chapter gives a general description of the demographic and biographical characteristics of the 57 paraprofessionals interviewed. In addition, some of their general attitudes and orientations will be described. When possible, data in these same areas will also be presented for the seven professional workers. Any summarizations of these data, including comparisons between the professional and paraprofessional groups, are based purely on inspection of the data. The numbers are too small to permit generalizations.

The Personal History Inventory (PHI) was the principal instrument used to collect demographic and life history data on the respondents. It included the following nine major areas of inquiry:

- basic demographic characteristics;
- past family history;
- geographic mobility;
- previous employment;
- educational status;

- present family history;
- health;
- attitudes toward present employment; and
- relationships with people.

Some of these areas call for descriptions of present life (e.g., present family), some focus on past events (e.g., previous employment), and some deal with attitudes and feelings (e.g., relationships with people). The most frequent, or model, response will be described for each area. Where appropriate, studies in the literature reporting similar data will be cited in order to relate our work to that of previous investigators.

Biographic and Demographic Characteristics

Age. The average age of the respondents was 37 years. Most were between the ages of 20 and 30; very few were older than 50. These statistics are similar to findings in previous studies.[92] Professionals ranged in age from 27 to 53 years, with the average being 34.

Sex. Approximately 81 percent of the paraprofessionals were female. This high percentage is consistent with most previous studies (e.g., Adelson and Kovner, 1969; Berryman, 1968; Office of Research, Demonstration, and Training, SRS, 1970), which place the proportion of female paraprofessionals at 60 to 80 percent. The majority of professionals interviewed in the field were male.

Race. Almost two-thirds of the paraprofessionals were non-white, and of these the vast majority were black. As indicated in Chapter 3, it is most likely that the paraprofessional will be a member of a racial or ethnic minority. The racial composition of our sample was influenced to some extent by the geographical sampling of agencies. For example, in the western portion of the sample one-third of the paraprofessionals were Mexican or Indian; in the eastern and southeastern portions the majority were black. Data obtained by Brecher, et al. (1968), Grosser (1965), Harvey (1968), and Shostak (1966) have also shown that the race of paraprofessionals tends to vary with geographical region. Professionals sampled were usually white.

Past Family History.[93] Most paraprofessional respondents said their parents had had very little formal education (less than six years). The father had done or was doing semi-skilled work requiring physical labor, such as coal mining, farming, or construction. There were very few indications of the male parent being engaged in skilled trades.

At least one parent had died fairly late in the lives of a majority of the paraprofessionals. Usually it was the mother. Where both parents were dead, the mother had died first in many cases.

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[92] The Office of Research, Demonstration, and Training, SRS (1970) study data indicated that the average age of paraprofessionals in SRS agencies was the late 30's.

[93] Past family refers to the family group with whom the respondent grew up.

Parental divorce or separation had taken place during the lives of approximately one-third of the paraprofessional respondents, typically before they were 15 years old. Nevertheless, a majority of the respondents said they had close personal relationships with their parents, who were very interested in what they did though important matters were discussed infrequently.

The majority of workers reported that their parents had received very little financial assistance or social welfare services from public agencies. When services were received (approximately 25 percent of the respondents indicated this), they tended to be rehabilitation services involving dental work, glasses, and hearing aids. Public assistance in the form of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) had been received by about one-fifth of the group. Generally speaking, however, the families from which paraprofessionals came had very limited experience as clients of SWRS organizations.

Most professionals reported that both parents had obtained high school diplomas. Some parents had less than 12 years of education, others had college degrees. All of the fathers did skilled or professional work such as engineering, sales, and university teaching.

Two respondents said their parents were dead, and one indicated his parents had separated or divorced when he was between 11 and 15 years old. For the most part, both parents of the professionals were still alive and living together.

There was no indication that the parents of the professional worker had received any form of financial assistance or social welfare services from public agencies.

Most professionals said they had been quite happy in their parents' homes. Though at times there had been disagreements, their parents had shown a substantial interest in their activities and discussions on important matters had sometimes taken place.

Geographic Mobility. In general, most paraprofessionals said they had moved from one residence to another at least twice before they were 18 years old. For some this had been a move from one city to another, since they indicated they had lived in two or three different cities. In the five years prior to being interviewed, over half of the paraprofessionals had moved one time or less.

One of the reasons for our probing past family history and recent movement was that many writers have recommended that paraprofessionals should be "indigenous" to the community in which they work. "Indigenous" workers who would serve as "bridges" to the community presumably would have lived there long enough to know its problems and people.[94]

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[94] An examination of this hypothesis would require additional data on whether moves were within the same community. The concept of what is the relevant "community" is partially a question of orientation as well as geographic reality.

The literature (e.g., Riessman, 1964) has indicated that sometimes a worker hired from the client group begins to identify more with the employing organization than the group. He begins to dissociate himself from the clients and may even try to move away from the group as well as from co-workers who are like him.

It could not be determined from the data whether this was true of the paraprofessionals interviewed. However, the most frequent response of those who had moved after beginning work at their agencies was that their last move had taken them farther away from their co-workers and their agency's clients.

Most of the professional respondents had not changed their place of residence since beginning work with their current employer. In the past five years they had moved twice or less on the average. During their lifetime they had lived in two or more cities, generally after they were 18 years old.

Previous Employment. The majority of the paraprofessionals stated they did not have part-time jobs while in school. Most typically, they got their first full-time jobs between the ages of 15 and 17.

Regarding previous work history, most indicated they had been out of work six months or less during the last five years. Immediately before joining their agency more than half had been out of work two months or less and approximately one-third over seven months.

Most of the professionals had held part-time jobs for more than two years while still in school. Their first full-time jobs had been obtained between the ages of 15 and 17. There had been few periods of unemployment. For example, there had not been any months in the past five years or any weeks in the past year that they had been out of work. Also, they had lost no time in moving from their previous job to their present one.

Prior to their employment in SWRS agencies the paraprofessional respondents as a whole had held a variety of jobs in a wide range of occupational environments, as indicated by the titles of their last jobs. Only 15 percent of the workers sampled had held aide jobs. The specific titles mentioned were psychiatric aide, nurse's aide, teacher's aide, and social services aide. About 40 percent had held positions as industrial laborers. Titles such as factory worker, electronics assembler, shirt presser, and keypunch operator were listed. Slightly over 25 percent had previously worked in industrial/service positions. Included in this group were such jobs as cashier, waitress, beautician, maid, and domestic worker. Approximately 9 percent indicated they had not held jobs outside the home. The remaining 9 percent listed participation in a Work Incentive Program (WIN) or Community Action Program (CAP) as their previous employment.

Only 11 percent had worked for less than one year and a majority of these listed WIN or CAP as their previous employment. Approximately 40 percent had been employed for one to three years, 15 percent for three to five years, and 35 percent for five years or more.

These data seemed to indicate that the respondents had not come from a population historically unable or unwilling to hold down employment, the group traditionally referred to as the hard-core unemployed.

Educational Status. Most paraprofessionals had had 12 years of formal education and possessed a high school diploma; in no case did an individual say that he had had less than nine years of formal education. The level of education of the interviewees seems comparable with that described in many of the studies cited in Chapter 3 (e.g., Berryman, 1968; Grosser, 1965; Committee on Effective Utilization of the Rehabilitation Counselor and Supporting Staff, 1968; Larson, et al., 1969; and Office of Research, Demonstration, and Training, SRS, 1970).

When the paraprofessionals took special courses for a job, they usually took them at a junior college or vocational school. Only one individual said he had received formal training at a senior college in preparation for a job. Most often, the in-service training programs were described by the paraprofessionals as social service aide training.

All of the professionals had at least a bachelor's and most had completed the requirements for their master's degree.

Present Family History. Most of the paraprofessionals replying to the PHI had been married once, between the ages of 20 and 25. Their spouses had from nine to 11 years of education, slightly less than that of the typical paraprofessional respondent.

They said they completely supported themselves financially, though this is somewhat difficult to interpret since they also said their spouses were employed and contributed to the total family income, which ranged from $200 to $600 per month. The family supported by this income was usually made up of husband, wife, and three children. In some cases relatives were also living with the respondents.

Average monthly income for the family was $400 and usually came from a variety of sources. In some ways this average was unrepresentative. For instance, 23 percent of the families earned less than $300 and 23 percent over $700. When asked how much income they expected to be making in the next five years, most answered between $5,000 and $7,000 a year.

It is apparent from these data that a significant number of the paraprofessionals interviewed were not at the poverty or subsistence level. The incomes of one-fourth were substantially higher than those of many in the New Careers programs. For example, Wilson, et al. (1969) reported that approximately nine out of 10 workers in 53 New Careers programs had incomes of less than $4,500 a year. Comparing this figure with ours, however, requires adjustments for inflation, changes in the standard of living, and other economic factors affecting absolute income levels.

Many authors have pointed out that paraprofessionals may be former clients of SWRS agencies. Very few individuals in our study said they had received public assistance, or had been recruited by agencies from which they had formerly received SWRS services. These results differ from information obtained from SRS, which indicated that from one-third to one-half of the paraprofessionals may have received public assistance.

The typical professional had been married once, between the ages of 23 and 25. His spouse had a bachelor's degree with some work toward a master's. He was self-supporting, with an income of more than $800 a month which provided for a spouse, two children, and himself. He had never received any SWRS services or financial assistance.

Health. Thirty-six percent of the paraprofessionals had been absent at least one week in the past year because of illness. The majority had lost less than one week and only 14 percent had lost more than three weeks.

When asked about the kinds of health problems they had, several paraprofessionals said they were suffering from anemia. Other than this they had no ailments.

Apparently, the professionals were in good health. They had lost less than one week of working time in the last year because of illness, and most did not mention any health problem. Where health problems were noted, they tended to be for complaints such as hypertension.

ORIENTATIONS OF PARAPROFESSIONALS AND PROFESSIONALS

Orientation Toward People in General

Most paraprofessionals said that their co-workers, both professional and paraprofessional, often asked for their advice at work. After-work socializing with their co-workers occurred about once a month.

An indication of the action orientation and extroversion of the typical paraprofessional was that most respondents said they enjoyed talking with strangers, frequently told others what they felt, and were very likely to give advice to people with problems. Furthermore, they indicated that very often they tried to straighten things out when co-workers or clients hurt them. They felt they could solve personal problems because of their ability to understand the feelings of others.

The professionals said people often asked for their advice and that they were ready to help friends who had problems.

The professionals said they had fewer friends than most people, but enjoyed talking to strangers. After-work socializing with their co-workers usually occurred about twice a month.

Orientation Toward Clients

Concerning their relationships with clients, the paraprofessionals typically felt they did not need a lot of education nor to have experienced the same problems as their clients in order to help them. Moreover, they believed that it was not necessary to know their clients personally. What was important was the willingness to try to help people in trouble.

On the whole, they said they had no difficulty working with male or female clients. When information was needed they could get it from the client's friends and relatives, who trusted them to use it in confidence.

Riessman (1965) commented that one problem in utilizing paraprofessional workers is that they have a tendency to get too personally involved with their clients, who may then take advantage of this to the detriment of the worker's effectiveness. The paraprofessionals in our sample did not agree with this conclusion. They said they did not have to know a client personally to help him, but even if they did get close to him he would not try to take advantage.

The professional respondents seemed to agree with most of the opinions of the paraprofessionals. They said that workers did not need a lot of education to help clients; that it was not necessary for them to know clients personally or to have had problems like theirs; and that if a worker grew close to an individual needing help that individual would not try to take advantage of the worker.

PATTERNS OF WORKER UTILIZATION

Relationship of Motives to Worker Tasks

Previous sections of this report have discussed organizational motives for hiring paraprofessional workers, and how these motives were related to the work assigned to paraprofessionals. The discussion was more a presentation of our own thoughts than a reflection of ideas presented in the literature. Of strong interest to us, therefore, in gathering information about utilization patterns was to discover relationships, if any, between agency motives and worker tasks. We questioned professionals about both motives for employment and subsequent task activities of the paraprofessionals.

One of the agencies from which information was gathered was an OEO agency. Here the goals were those discussed in the enacting legislation: paraprofessionals guaranteed the participation and employment of the poor in the agency programs by their very presence, and also were intended to improve service delivery to the community. The paraprofessional was more than a bridge between the community and the agency. He was expected partially to fill the roles of innovator and mediator, working with community groups in delivering services and developing their self-reliance. There was also a training objective. Hopefully, as the skills of the paraprofessionals increased, they would be promoted in the organization and would eventually develop saleable skills and find employment elsewhere. Others from the community would then be hired to assume these vacant positions and, in time, would move up through the organization and out into the community work force.

Officially, the purposes and duties of paraprofessionals in this OEO agency had changed very little since the positions were first developed. In practice, however, the patterns of utilization depended to a large extent on the judgments of the workers' immediate supervisors. Each worker was treated individually, with autonomy and discretion being allowed to those that displayed competence. It quite often happened that the task activities of an individual worker increased or decreased in difficulty and complexity according to the supervisor's directives. There was no agency policy guiding such changes, which were made on the basis of the personal assessments and interpretations of supervisors.

Informants from two other agencies commented that the main purpose of paraprofessionals was to serve as a bridge to the community. It was their role to carry information between the agency and the community about services available and services desired. They could not act upon this information nor solicit from the client information about personal needs beyond that which was prescribed. Thus, in actual operation, ways of addressing agency objectives and the activities of workers that might be helpful in achieving these objectives were restricted by the limiting of workers' discretion in following up informative leads. Professionals in both agencies felt that the paraprofessionals could assume some of the activities of the caseworker, although they differed in their opinions of how this might best be done. In one they felt that the completion and processing of many of the routine reports for a client should be left to the paraprofessional. In the other they felt that this was not the optimum use of the paraprofessional, and that responsibility for routine follow-up and referral activities could be added to this paper work. In neither case did the agency seem to have a clear rationale for what paraprofessional workers were expected to do.

Both agencies had moved toward a broadening of roles a few months after employing paraprofessionals, but went about this role enlargement in different ways. One agency–the agency that emphasized report completion–originally assigned each paraprofessional to a different unit in the agency in which he was to work exclusively, but soon discovered that this led to poor utilization and irregular work demands. It therefore decided to use all paraprofessionals as needed in all units in the agency. The variety of duties performed by the paraprofessional was increased to include follow-up and referral activities, supportive services (e.g., homemaking and personal care), and collateral services (e.g., visiting schools and foster parents to obtain information about a child's development). Workers were given specific assignments, some working only with foster children, others only with certain supportive services. Thus, although the variety of possible activities was increased, individual paraprofessionals specialized in some activities in addition to performing a core of tasks common to all.

The other agency also increased the responsibilities of the paraprofessional workers from merely exchanging information and handling routine follow-up and referrals to activities closely resembling those traditionally thought of as being a caseworker's. As they demonstrated competence on routine assignments they were given more autonomy. They were allowed to seek out those in the community who needed services, to schedule consultation sessions with agency professionals and follow up suggestions made by them, and to ensure continuity if referral to another agency was necessary. Only therapeutic counseling was excluded. Here also individual competence was the basis for making assignments to workers.

The respondents in the fourth agency indicated that the original objective for the use of paraprofessionals was to dispense services not usually given which these people might be well suited to do. Such services included tutoring children in academic subjects, teaching children to play with educational toys and equipment, and working with retarded children under the direction of a professional. The paraprofessionals were intended to act as consultants to unwed mothers and mothers of foster children, assisting with budgeting the family's allowance and with the care of the child. They were to schedule family visits for children who had been placed in foster homes. They were to use their knowledge of the community to help clients find suitable housing and furnishings.

The authorization of such activities required that the professionals in the agency recognize the need for them and inform the appropriate paraprofessional. All paraprofessionals were assigned to one supervisor who made assignments. But these assignments came to the supervisor from the caseworkers, who saw clients and controlled the handling of each case. The informants reported that the professional staff was not adequately trained in the roles of paraprofessionals or the activities they could perform. First, there was apprehension on the part of professionals that the paraprofessionals were being trained to replace them. Secondly, there was doubt that the paraprofessionals could competently perform the types of tasks described. Thirdly, there was little organizational pressure or incentive to encourage the professional staff to use paraprofessionals. As a result, assignments and tasks requested by professional workers were not the new activities and services the planners expected, but were, for the most part, routine chores like transporting clients to appointments at hospitals or schools. Many clients came to regard the workers as baby sitters, and would request through caseworkers that paraprofessionals be sent to their homes to instruct or lead children in play, while they took care of personal business such as marketing. As a result, the original intent of the agency was not fulfilled and the paraprofessionals' role became much narrower and more routine than desired.

A reversal of this trend accompanied recent administrative shifts in the agency. In an attempt to decentralize services, the agency established in each community a number of small, comprehensive district offices to which several paraprofessional workers were reassigned from central headquarters, usually from one to three for an office. As a result, the paraprofessional was called upon to perform varied activities and was frequently associated with more than one caseworker in a continuous relationship. Apparently this led to assignments which included more of the activities originally intended.

Our observation from these data is that the process of determining task activities for paraprofessionals is influenced by many factors. Such factors include the perceptions, knowledge, and attitudes of the professional toward the paraprofessional, of the client toward the paraprofessional, and of the paraprofessional toward both and to his organization. In each of the four agencies examined, the original role of the paraprofessional had been modified by one or more of these factors. We do not have enough data to elaborate on the nature of this influence. Hopefully, more extensive data collected in the future will clarify these relationships.

Kinds of Work Activities

Another area of interest was the kinds of worker activities observed during our investigation. Paraprofessionals reported the amount of time spent performing activities in each of 26 task clusters. Workers were formed into groups on the basis of profile similarity of major activities, that is, workers in groups tended to have a generally similar pattern of tasks and time spent on them. Because of the small number of people covered, statistical grouping methodology was not feasible; the groups were formed from judgments of the project staff and are subject to interpretation. They are presented in Table 17.

In general, paraprofessionals engaged in activities similar to those described in the literature reviewed in Chapter 4. The largest number were performing a bridge or outreach function; others were occupied as transportation aides, administrative or "intake" workers, homemaking aides, and clerical workers.

Group 1, the largest, was composed of workers from three agencies. Their main activity was finding people in the community in need of services, explaining to them what their own agency or other agencies could offer, and keeping in touch to ensure that they had requested and were receiving these services. The workers were also responsible for recording pertinent information for agency records.

Table 17

Types of Paraprofessional Worker Assignments

Worker Group[a]	*Task Activities*[b]
1	Going out of the agency and into the community to try to find people who need services.
(N=26)	Telling clients about the programs, services, and kinds of help your agency can give them.
	Getting information from clients through interviews to find out the kinds of needs and problems they have.

Table 17 (continued)

Worker Group[a]	*Task Activities*[b]
	Referring clients who need help to your agency or other agencies, and following them up to make sure they get the help they need.
	Carrying out clerical tasks or paper work. (For example, filling out forms or requisitions, filing, typing, dictating.)
2 (N=5)	Telling clients about the programs, services, and kinds of help your agency can give them.
	Referring clients who need help to your agency or other agencies, and following them up to make sure they get the help they need.
	Giving personal care. (For example, helping people with grooming, giving people comfort.)
	Going with clients or taking them to places where they can get help. (For example, taking clients or driving clients to places where they need to go.)
	Carrying out clerical tasks or paper work. (For example, filling out forms or requisitions, filing, typing, dictating.)
3 (N=7)	Going with clients or taking them to places where they can get help. (For example, taking clients or driving clients to places where they need to go.)
	Carrying out clerical tasks or paper work. (For example, filling out forms or requisitions, filing, typing, dictating.)
4 (N=4)	Referring clients who need help to your agency or other agencies, and following them up to make sure they get the help they need.
	Finding resources and sources of help for clients. (For example, finding people who will give furniture, clothing, food, medicine, or money to clients; finding foster homes; finding day care facilities; finding jobs for clients.)
	Carrying out clerical tasks or paper work. (For example, filling out forms or requisitions, filing, typing, dictating.)
5 (N=4)	Doing homemaking and housekeeping tasks for clients. (For example, cleaning house, cooking, buying groceries.)
	Giving personal care. (For example, helping people with grooming, giving people comfort.)
	Going with clients or taking them to places where they can get help. (For example, taking clients or driving clients to places where they need to go.)
6 (N=2)	Carrying out clerical tasks or paper work. (For example, filling out forms or requisitions, filing, typing, dictating.)

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[a] N=number of workers in each group. Groups were formed on the basis of profile similarity of major activities; that is, workers in each group tended to have a generally similar pattern of tasks and time spent on each.

[b] Activities are listed in descending order of time spent on each per week

The activities of workers in Group 2 were similar to those of Group 1 in that they entailed responsibility for telling people in the community about available services and subsequently checking as to whether they had requested and received these services. But unlike the workers in Group 1, these did not go into the community seeking those who needed services; rather they acted after a request was made by the client or personnel in other agencies. They also gave clients personal care, aiding them in grooming, acting as their companion, or escorting them to places to receive services. As in Group 1, workers here recorded appropriate information about the clients for agency records.

The activities of Group 3 consisted almost exclusively of transporting clients to appointments or service centers and recording this information for agency files. No continuing working relationships with clients were reported.

Group 4 worked with clients who had either been referred by other agencies or who had come to the agency seeking help. As in other groups, these workers referred clients to the appropriate personnel and followed up to see that the aid had been given. In addition, a major portion of their time was spent trying to secure furniture, clothing, food, medicines, etc., for clients from various community sources. These workers also recorded information about clients.

Workers in Group 5 were almost solely engaged in helping clients in their homes or taking them to appropriate service centers. Specific activities included cleaning house, cooking, buying groceries, helping with grooming, giving comfort, and driving or otherwise transporting clients. These workers were not responsible for finding clients who needed assistance nor for explaining available services to them.

Workers in Group 6 were performing clerical activities, such as filling out forms, typing, and filing. They had little contact with clients.

Decision Making in Completing Job Tasks

For each of the tasks the paraprofessionals reported were part of their duties, they were asked to answer four questions about the amount of discretion they were allowed:

- Can you choose whether or not to do this task?
- Can you choose how to do this task?
- Can you choose when to do this task?
- Can you choose how thoroughly or how well to do this task?

Analyses of the responses revealed little consistency within job groups or within an agency. When workers were grouped by activities without reference to agency, some responded that they could often or very often make their own choices while others in the same group responded that they rarely or never could make these decisions. It was the same when the responses of all the workers within one agency were analyzed.

These results are consistent with other findings that the supervisors of paraprofessionals usually structured work activities according to individual competencies. Workers who had demonstrated greater skill were given more responsible tasks and more autonomy.

Attitudes About Job Tasks

The paraprofessionals were also asked the following questions about each of the tasks they performed:

- How helpful is this task to the client?
- How satisfying is this task to you?
- How important is this task to your agency?
- How hard is it for you to do this task?

In general, respondents agreed that all tasks performed were "often" or "very often" helpful to the clients, that they themselves were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" in performing them, and that they were "important" or "very important" to the agency. Within this favorable pattern the greatest variability and the lowest ratings occurred in responses about homemaking and housekeeping tasks, personal care of clients, and clerical tasks or paper work. While these three tasks were in general rated as being helpful, satisfying, and important, there were several respondents who rated them as being only "rarely helpful," "sometimes satisfying," and of "very little importance." These findings are interesting because they suggest that the tasks most frequently assigned to these workers are rated lowest by them. Nearly all paraprofessionals were asked to complete forms and reports and/or to perform filing and other clerical tasks. In addition, the tasks of homemaking duties, housekeeping, and taking clients places made up the bulk of the duties for three of the groups of workers. If these are not highly regarded activities, it would be useful for supervisors to know this.

There was not such a uniformly positive response to the question which asked how hard each task was to perform. Although a few respondents indicated "this task is never hard for me," many said the tasks they performed were "often hard" or "very often hard." Those most frequently cited as being difficult were:

- going out of the agency and into the community to try to find people who need services;
- referring clients who need help to the agency or other agencies, and following up to make sure they get the help they need;
- doing homemaking and housekeeping tasks for clients;
- giving personal care;
- taking clients to places where they can get help;
- getting people to do something about problems in the community.

ASSIMILATION OF WORKERS

Chapter 5 discussed the complexities and frequent contradictions in the assimilation of paraprofessionals into SWRS agencies. Numerous philosophies and points of view have influenced their recruitment, selection, orientation, and training. The field study of these elements of the assimilation process was based primarily on data yielded by three of the instruments described in the preceding chapter. Selected items from the Worker Orientation Survey (WOS) will be used to describe some of the orientations of paraprofessionals and professionals toward their agency's assimilation process. The Interview Schedule for Paraprofessionals and the Interview Schedule for Professionals will serve as a basis for an in-depth presentation of this process.

Recruitment

Almost all of the paraprofessionals indicated that they had first heard of the position in their agency through traditional, direct sources. About 54 percent had received information from WIN or CAP counselors whose duty it was to inform program participants of possible employment. Another 16 percent had had previous contact with the agency itself either through volunteer or community work or as recipients of services. A slightly smaller number, 13 percent, had been referred to the agency by city or state employment agencies. Of the remaining 17 percent, most had heard of an opening through friends or informal contacts (e.g., church groups).

As we have indicated in Chapter 5, Otis (1965) had pointed out that the major means for disseminating job information was the spoken word. This seems to be true for the paraprofessionals interviewed in our field investigation. Martin (1969) also concluded from a review of MDTA projects that the most frequent single technique used was referral by another person. At least three out of four people in our sample were referred to agency job openings in this manner. Community informants (Grosser, 1969a) or "internal caretakers" (Riessman, 1965a) were only minimally involved in the recruitment process. There was no indication that the mass media (e.g., newspapers, circulars, television, radio) had had much influence on the paraprofessionals' knowledge of job openings. Regardless of the means used, the workers interviewed indicated no difficulty in finding out about available positions.

Appraisal and Selection

Variables Used by Agencies. In order to gather information on the characteristics of paraprofessionals being sought, professionals in the agencies were asked to indicate the qualifications they required. In two agencies, the main criterion was the ability to project a warm, friendly demeanor. The paraprofessionals as "bridging" agents were responsible for initial client contact, and it was felt the most important ability they could have would be to establish rapport with the client during this highly important first encounter. Such characteristics as verbal fluency and accuracy, poise, self-confidence, and openness were also valued.

The third agency stressed verbal skills, but the only formal requirements for selection were that the applicant be between 22 and 65 years old and live within a designated area. Final screening of applicants was conducted by a panel of three interviewers, not necessarily members of the agency but familiar with agency operations. There were several panel members whose services were used. Apparently, no specific criteria were given to the panel members, though great weight was attached to verbal skills and the ability to communicate.

The fourth agency based its selection of applicants on a variety of criteria: school grades through the 8th grade, math and English evaluations from a previous training program, previous work history, and an assessment of their care for their own children. An interview was also administered to obtain information about child care, previous employment, and general background. High academic achievement, work history in related activities, and evidence of being able to care for their own children were the most valued combination of characteristics. Of these, academic achievement and the ability to deal with children were weighted heavily and about equally.

This information indicates that all agencies placed great emphasis on traditional academic achievement as evidenced by verbal expression or grades. As pointed out in Chapter 5, selection criteria such as these effectively exclude some of the more disadvantaged applicants, and benefit individuals closest to middle class attitudes, values, and life styles. The paraprofessionals interviewed seemed to confirm that the selection process emphasized verbal and interpersonal skills. They did not resemble the disadvantaged indigenous worker often portrayed in the literature.

Methods Used for Paraprofessional Selection. Procedures for selecting paraprofessionals were similar in all agencies studied. Workers were interviewed and asked to complete an application blank. In no case was a written test administered. The number of interviews and interviewers were somewhat different in the various agencies. In two of the agencies connected with state programs, initial employment interviews were held at the state employment center. This amounted to an unassembled oral merit system examination. The result of this interview determined an individual's position on an employment register. The next step was an interview with agency personnel for final selection. Usually, agency personnel were required to select from the top positions on the employment register, unless it could be proved that they were not qualified for the job or declined the position. In these agencies, therefore, initial screening was made by the state employment service. Applicants who did not do well in this interview either were not placed on the employment register or received a very low position. Paraprofessional respondents from these agencies indicated that they did not know at the time of the interview nor at any time after what the criteria for selection were. They could not remember any specific questions asked and recalled only a general discussion of their personal background and previous employment.

In the third agency, all applicants were selected from a WIN program. According to agency personnel, about 50 individuals were interviewed for approximately 30 positions.[95] The paraprofessionals describing this said that they did not think these interviews were selection devices, but rather ways of giving information to them about the positions available. Many felt that the interviews were held to give them a chance to decide whether they wanted to work in the agency or not. Again, no specific questions could be remembered from the interview, only a general discussion of background and previous employment.

A fourth agency did not appear to have a consistent policy regarding interviewing for selection. Workers were interviewed by personnel from either or both the central headquarters and the district agencies. The paraprofessionals interviewed were aware that these were selection interviews, but again were unable to specify criteria for selection or details of the interview.

Notification of selection after the interview with agency personnel was rapid in almost every case. Over 90 percent of the workers said they had received notification within 10 days and usually within five days; the remainder said it had taken about four weeks. In almost all instances (90 percent) notification of acceptance was by letter, in the remaining cases by phone. A few workers indicated some lag between the time they submitted an application and the scheduling of an interview, apparently because positions were not available.

Motives Influencing Paraprofessionals' Choices. In a previous section, we have indicated that only a small percentage of paraprofessionals (15 percent) had previously held aide positions. Thus, it would seem that the furthering of a career in the human services was not generally a motive for seeking employment. This impression is reinforced by other information obtained. Approximately 40 percent said they had learned of their present positions while enrolled in a CAP or WIN program and, although they did not submit applications for other jobs, would have been equally interested in other types of employment. About 30 percent had submitted applications to other organizations, usually industry or government, and said they would have been interested in available positions. The remaining 30 percent had not made other applications, and indicated they wished to obtain a community-oriented position.

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[95] The reader is warned against attempting to form a profile of each agency on the basis of references to "first agency," "second agency," and "third agency," etc. In an effort to preserve confidentiality, the designations "first," "second," "third," etc. are purposely inconsistent from section to section in the report of results.

Among reasons respondents gave for accepting their present positions were:

"Better myself financially, morally, and spiritually."
"Get off welfare."
"Enjoy working with people."
"Get to travel around, spend time outdoors."
"Wanted to help people in the community."
"Was doing volunteer work and wanted a job that paid."
"Love for people."
"Only job available."
"Wanted to give service."
"Had to support my family."

These motives may be classified as either "self-directed" or "other-directed." Self-directed motives would be those that pertained mainly to self or family units, other-directed to the community or people outside the immediate family. Approximately 33 percent of the respondents gave both kinds of motives for seeking jobs with their agencies, usually without being able to say which was the more important in their thinking. The desire to serve the community or help other people seemed to be as strong as the desire to support their families, get off welfare, or better themselves.

Another 33 percent gave only self-directed reasons for seeking their jobs. They wished to better their lives, support their families, take the first job offered them, etc. The remaining third gave other-directed responses when citing motives for employment. Many of these indicated that their husbands had jobs and that it was not a financial necessity that they work, or that they had left or turned down higher paying jobs for their present employment. Their main reason for performing this type of work was to be of service to the community and to other people.

Training

Both the paraprofessionals and the professionals were asked to describe the orientation and training processes used in their agencies. There was a high degree of similarity of perception between the two groups.

Three of the four agencies gave a short orientation about the agency and its functioning to all paraprofessionals. Usually taking less than a day, it was conducted the first day of training, most often by future supervisors and agency directors, who explained the purposes of the agency and its departments. Workers were also shown the physical plant and introduced to personnel with whom they would have contact. Any forms that needed to be completed were filled out during this time.

The fourth agency periodically scheduled a one-day orientation session for all new employees. This consisted of a general discussion of the objectives of the organization and a tour of the central headquarters.

All of the agencies provided some training for the paraprofessionals. In two agencies this lasted three months and consisted of combined classroom sessions and work assignments. Work assignments were carefully selected to be appropriate for a particular point in training and to give the trainee a broad range of experience. During the initial phase of training the paraprofessional was usually accompanied by a professional. In the later phases, tasks were performed without close supervision. In one agency training was conducted by state personnel from a department concerned with all training of state employees; in the other, it was conducted at a nearby college by both college and agency personnel.

Workers in both agencies strongly supported the training programs, saying they were interesting, beneficial, and well-conducted. Almost all (92 percent) agreed that the kinds of things they had learned were related to their jobs. In addition, this same proportion pointed out that their training had been quite helpful to them in carrying out their duties.

The other two agencies had training programs of approximately two months' duration. Both were similar in content to those already described, the main difference being that they were more intensive than the three-month courses. All those who had taken the two-month training program rated it very highly. They felt that the skills necessary to perform their initial tasks had been adequately covered. One agency, however, had discontinued the program and substituted on-the-job training by the workers' supervisors. The few who had received this on-the-job training had different opinions about it. Some thought it adequate and about an equal number thought it inadequate. Apparently, there was no prescribed course, so that responsibility for developing content and materials resided solely in the supervisors. Thus, the mixed reactions of paraprofessionals under different supervisors were not surprising, since the value of the training depended entirely upon the insight, available time, and teaching ability of the supervisor. Even those paraprofessionals who thought it adequate felt that it could have progressed more smoothly and evenly. They realized, however, that the supervisor was not able to devote as much time and effort as desired because of other job responsibilities.

Summary of the Assimilation Process

Assimilation into these four agencies was a smooth process according to the paraprofessional workers interviewed. They indicated no difficulty in finding out about available positions or in applying for these and receiving information about the results of such application. The time taken by the agencies for processing this information was short. All respondents felt that orientation and training were the most important aspects of the assimilation process. Most had undergone formal training that combined classroom and work activities chosen to provide a variety of experiences representative of tasks to be performed on the job. This type of training received unanimous acceptance by the paraprofessionals, who indicated that they felt such training was directly related to their job and the agency. On the other hand, those that had undergone only on-the-job training had mixed reactions, some negative. The general feeling was that such training was in many cases not as systematic, and therefore not as beneficial as the formal training.

CONSEQUENCES OF PARAPROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

As has been discussed in Chapters 1 and 6, determining the consequences of employing paraprofessional workers for the agency, the clients, and the workers themselves is extremely difficult. One part of this task believed to be within the scope of this project was undertaken: that of investigating the adaptation of the paraprofessional worker and the agency to one another. In the main, this was done by gathering opinions about the relationships between the paraprofessionals and the professionals from both groups of workers. These opinions are summarized in this section. Because of the small number of both agencies and workers investigated, we must advise caution in interpreting these results. For this reason, we present a narrative of our findings rather than definitive explanations of observed relationships.

Adaptation as Described by Paraprofessional Workers

A consistent observation of paraprofessional workers in our discussions was that the number of personnel in their agency or physical location strongly influenced not only whom they came in contact with but also how they perceived these contacts. In small agencies and decentralized units or districts with fewer than 25 or 30 workers, the paraprofessionals indicated that they had frequent contact with all levels of personnel from the director to their immediate supervisor. Interactions during the day were both formal and informal, both on a business and a social level. In addition, the atmosphere of the work center and these contacts was frequently described as "happy" or "very friendly." Some workers termed their work group "one big happy family."

Specific business contacts covered not only discussion of work assignments and work performance but also queries about agency policy and procedures. The paraprofessionals often reported what they considered important information about the community or specific clients to appropriate higher level personnel. Apparently such contacts were not initiated by the paraprofessionals only, for professional staff members would often seek the paraprofessionals' opinion about problem areas. In many instances especially close working relationships developed between the paraprofessional and caseworkers. The unanimous opinion of the paraprofessionals was that their opinions and information were definitely valued, and exerted an influence on decisions made.

Only one group of these workers indicated that there had ever been friction between themselves and the professional staff. This was at the commencement of their employment, and was attributed to the professional staff's uncertainty about their role, function, and duties. After it had become clear that they were not intended to replace the professionals, the friction, except for isolated cases, disappeared.

The informal or social contacts mentioned previously usually took the form of "joking and kidding around the office" or "talks over coffee." Also included were social functions sponsored by or given for the agency staff. However, there appeared to be no social friendships between the paraprofessionals and professionals.

In contrast with these reactions were those of workers located in large offices with numerous personnel. Here almost all contacts were with people in the community or with other paraprofessional workers. Several mentioned that they structured the situation in this way, trying to spend as much time out of the office as possible. Contacts with professional staff members were also solely restricted to their immediate supervisor and were mostly of a routine business nature–the discussion of assignments. Approximately half of this group said they sometimes initiated discussions with their supervisor about community problems or individual cases and felt that their opinions were respected. The other half said they very rarely initiated discussions about such issues with their supervisor and, when they did, found him of no help. These workers preferred to do what they could about any problem that arose and to go to their supervisor only when necessary. Needless to say, this group did not feel that their opinions were valued or sought by the professionals.

A majority of paraprofessionals in large agencies also indicated friction between the professionals and themselves, and in some cases strong antagonism toward the professionals. There was a general feeling that in many cases the professionals would take advantage of them by assigning all the work they themselves did not wish to do. This may not have been true of the immediate supervisor, but was generally applied to other professionals, especially caseworkers. Specific complaints were that several of the professional staff did not really have an interest in the agency's clients and, whenever possible, avoided going out into the community. As a result, paraprofessionals with little training for this might be called upon to deal with physicians and dentists. They also reported being sent into the community to bring a client to a service, only to find that the client had not been notified of this by the caseworker. Paraprofessionals said they were sometimes used as a coverup. The professional would leave the office on personal business, indicating he was going out to see a client, whom the paraprofessional in fact would be sent to visit. Also, if assignments were scheduled before regular working hours or anticipated to last beyond them, the paraprofessionals felt they would almost always be sent out whether or not they were the most appropriate personnel.

Adaptation as Described by Professional Workers

It was the unanimous opinion of the professionals that the rapport between the paraprofessional and the client was strong. Many described this relationship as much better than that between the caseworker and the client. Others felt that the clients had more faith in the agency now, having first learned to trust the workers and slowly to trust others in the agency. One agency, in an opinion survey of its clients regarding the delivery of services, had asked for information about the paraprofessional workers. The overwhelming response was that they were an asset to the agency and were more favorably received than caseworkers or other professionals.

All professionals generally felt that the paraprofessionals were better able to convince the clients that mistakes, delays, or a lack of service delivery were not due to callousness but rather to inadvertence or that the services requested were not offered by the agency. In explaining why this type of relationship existed, half felt that racial matching alone was the answer and half that similarity of experience was what counted. It is interesting to note that those with the former opinion were mainly from agencies in which most of the clients were from a minority group, usually black, while those with the latter opinion were from agencies which served racially balanced communities.

There were few negative comments. Some thought paraprofessionals had a tendency to identify with the clients rather than with agency policy and procedures. Friction between the paraprofessionals and others in the agency often resulted when required reports or requisitions were either not submitted or not submitted correctly. Some felt, on the other hand, that the paraprofessionals went to the opposite extreme, occasionally being more severe and critical toward the clients than were the professionals. Paraprofessionals reportedly berated clients for not keeping an appointment or not following instructions they were given.

One informant felt that when a close relationship developed the client often took advantage of it. Paraprofessionals would be requested to baby sit while the client deviously completed personal errands under the pretext of going to the hospital or dentist. At other times the paraprofessional would be asked to stop and pick up a few things before visiting a client, or the paraprofessional's company would be requested for a serious matter when in fact the client was lonely. According to this informant such requests would not be made of professional workers. It was the paraprofessional's peculiar position as part of the community and part of the agency that was exploited.

On the whole, however, the overwhelming opinion was that a strong positive relationship existed and that it had greatly improved agency-community relationships.

There was more diverse opinion on the paraprofessional's relationship to professionals and the impact on the professional staff. The size of the agency seemed to strongly influence the nature of the relationship. Informants in small agencies and in the district offices of large agencies characterized both the formal and informal encounters as friendly and mutually initiated. On the other hand, those from large agencies (50 or more personnel) indicated that friction and aloofness between the two groups were aggravated by the behavior of both. Each group kept to itself during the work day, and formal business conferences were usually devoted to exchanging information rather than to considering opinions which might lead to mutually acceptable decisions. A few informants felt that a major source of friction was the paraprofessionals' lack of understanding of the nature of administrative work and the necessity for keeping records. In this view the paraprofessionals tended to regard direct meetings with the clients as the only appropriate work of the agency, and those who did not have such meetings as unnecessary to the functioning of the agency.

The only discrepancy in the opinions held by professionals and paraprofessionals about the relationship between the two groups also occurred in a large agency. The professionals described the relationship as being positive and mutually initiated, the paraprofessionals said they wished to minimize contact and rarely asked the opinions of the professionals because they usually were of little value.

The size of the agency also influenced the paraprofessionals' impact on the professionals' roles. In many of the smaller agencies the introduction of these workers resulted in major changes in the activities of the other staff. In one agency the roles of 20-25 caseworkers were altered radically, as the paraprofessionals were made solely responsible for the initial contact with clients. Professional workers occasionally went into the community for subsequent contacts but even some of these were entrusted to the paraprofessionals. The center of gravity of the duties of these caseworkers also changed; they came to be associated with service delivery of one type rather than with a variety of cases that may have had different needs. Three of the caseworkers were called "assessment workers"; their main duties were to meet clients during their first visit to the agency to determine which services were appropriate. They then set up appointments with one or another group of caseworkers, referred to as "functionalists," who specialized in one particular service. There were approximately 17-22 workers in this designation. The roles and duties of the paraprofessionals were therefore an integral part of the service delivery process and very much a part of the restructuring of professional roles.

In a second small agency and frequently at the district offices of large agencies, the staffing patterns were defined at the initiative of the office. The roles of the paraprofessionals again became an integral part of the agency system. Professionals in these instances were aware of the functions of the paraprofessional, and because of the smallness of the agency were forced to interact with them on both a formal and informal level. This in most instances led to an understanding of the purposes of each group's job and to mutual acceptance.

Apparently the impact and assimilation of the paraprofessionals in one of the large agencies depended upon the actions of the supervisor. If this person chose to structure the activities of the work group so that paraprofessional and professional activities were integrated, the professionals would become cognizant of the role of the paraprofessional and some degree of cooperation would result. However, the paraprofessional was frequently utilized as an adjunct to the work group and assigned tangential activities no one else wished to perform or was given "busy work." In these cases very little interaction or cooperation occurred.

Another large agency reported almost no impact on the professional staff by the introduction of paraprofessionals. Initial contacts were characterized as "forced," and many professionals were fearful about the effect on their own job security. However, paraprofessionals were not utilized as had been anticipated, and their eventual roles were of only limited importance to the functioning of the agency.

The preparation of the professional staff with an explanation of why paraprofessionals were being brought into the agency and what their intended duties would be seems also to be strongly realted to the successful assimilation of these workers. In the small agencies and district offices, probably because these were being created, there was much discussion by the professional staff about the roles and specific duties of various personnel, including the paraprofessionals. This apparently alleviated fears and misconceptions about the utilization of paraprofessionals and facilitated their assimilation into the agency. In agencies in which these types of discussions did not take place, there seemed to be no understanding of the functions of paraprofessionals and of their relationship to professional staff members. Assimilation was either a painful process or was never achieved.

It also seems of prime importance to define their jobs so that the professional and the paraprofessional are interdependent in the delivery of services. If the paraprofessional is to act as an ancillary worker with a broad range of vaguely defined activities, his impact on the agency is likely to be small.

Successful assimilation seemed to reflect the degree to which paraprofessionals understood the workings and operations of the agency. Those that enjoyed good formal and informal relationships with the professionals on the staff were also described by professionals as knowing how the agency worked and how tasks could be accomplished. Those that were not well assimilated were reported not to know these things.

Summary

There was a high correspondence between the opinions of paraprofessionals and professionals on adaptation of workers to agency and agency to workers. Discussion with both groups indicated that agency size affected ease of adaptation. In smaller agencies both groups expressed positive attitudes and opinions. In large agencies both groups agreed that friction had occurred and that the process had been difficult. Agency size was a factor in the change of professionals' roles and duties with some restructuring of activities for these workers occurring in smaller agencies. Another factor was the preparation of the professional staff to accept the paraprofessional workers and their roles. Such preparation seems to facilitate the adaptation process; its absence can greatly change intended paraprofessional activities.

It was the consensus of the professionals that utilization of paraprofessionals had a positive effect upon the clients, both in improved service delivery and the improved relationships between the agency and the community.

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APPENDIX

THE NATIONAL STUDY OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND REHABILITATION WORKERS, WORK, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXTS

A SUMMARY

Jean Szaloczi Fine*

The Social and Rehabilitation Service (SRS) has undertaken a program of research to develop much-needed new knowledge about social welfare and rehabilitation workers, the work they do, and the organizational contexts in which that work is performed. The present publication is one of a series resulting from the program of research. This introduction is intended to give the reader a brief orientation to the program plan, why the research was undertaken, what is being attempted, and what kinds of publications and other outputs are expected to result.

This program of research–the National Study of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Workers, Work, and Organizational Contexts–is a set of projects, studies, and other research activities performed in part by SRS staff and in part by social scientists of various disciplines in universities, research institutes, and other nonfederal settings, with SRS direction and funding. It differs from previous research in that: it approaches the field as an "industry" and as a "national" service system; it is an attempt to look for important interrelationships among a large variety of critical attributes of workers, work, and work settings; and it combines a sample survey methodology with intensive investigations so that a depth of understanding can be combined with national estimates.

In a very real sense the research program may be said to have begun with the work of the task force on manpower whose report was published in 1965 by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare under the title *Closing the Gap in Social Work Manpower.* Certainly much study, analysis, and planning had preceded the letting of the first contract in this program in 1968. The program is expected to continue through 1974, but some analysis and many research utilization activities should continue beyond that time.**

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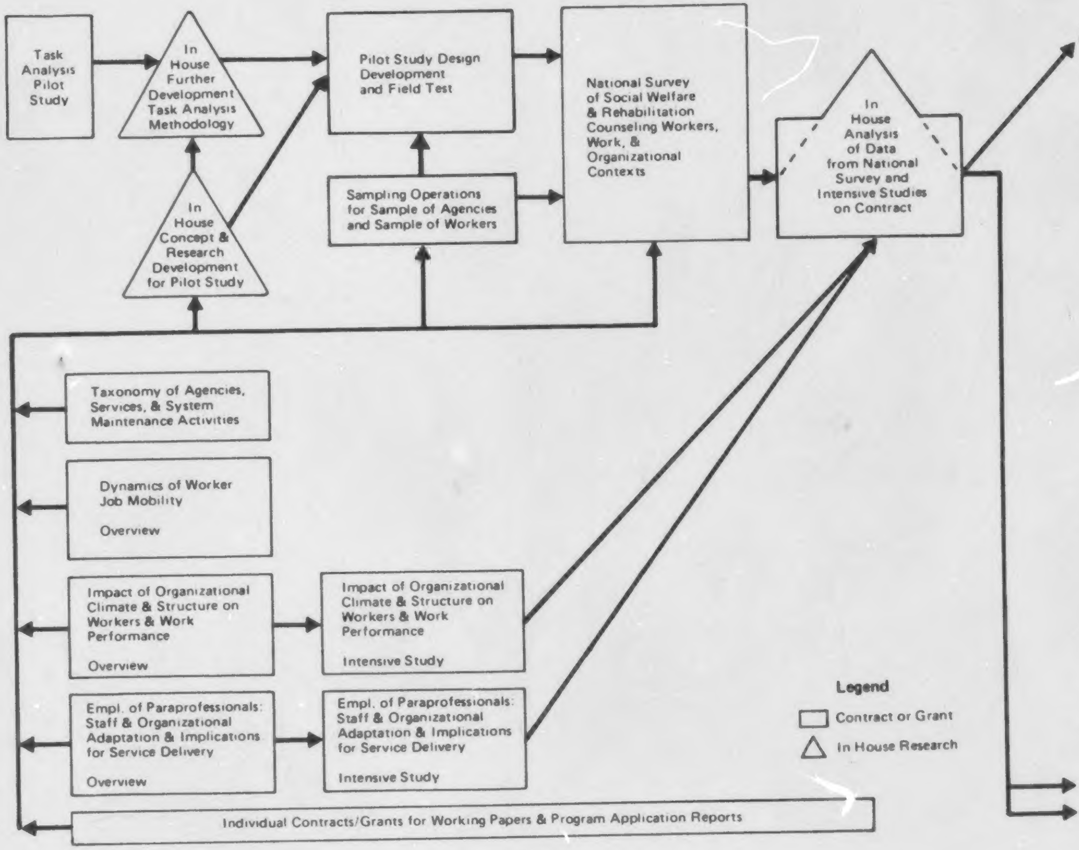
**The general outlines of the program and the interrelation of studies are indicated in the diagram.

NATIONAL STUDY OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND REHABILITATION WORKERS, WORK, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXTS


Task Analysis Pilot Study
In House Further Development Task Analysis Methodology
In House Concept & Research Development for Pilot Study
Pilot Study Design Development and Field Test
Sampling Operations for Sample of Agencies and Sample of Workers
National Survey of Social Welfare & Rehabilitation Counseling Workers, Work, & Organizational Contexts
In House Analysis of Data from National Survey and Intensive Studies on Contract
Taxonomy of Agencies, Services, & System Maintenance Activities
Dynamics of Worker Job Mobility
Overview
Impact of Organizational Climate & Structure on Workers & Work Performance
Overview
Impact of Organizational Climate & Structure on Workers & Work Performance
Intensive Study
Empl. of Paraprofessionals: Staff & Organizational Adaptation & Implications for Service Delivery
Overview
Empl. of Paraprofessionals: Staff & Organizational Adaptation & Implications for Service Delivery
Intensive Study
Individual Contracts/Grants for Working Papers & Program Application Reports
Legend
Contract or Grant
In House Research

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Analyses and Reports

Data Source Book from National Survey

Salaries and Working Conditions

Special Analysis of:
- Effects of education & training on worker & agency performance & job satisfaction & other worker characteristics
- Factors associated with differential worker job mobility
- Effects of organization & setting on worker & work performance
- Determinants of worker satisfaction
- Work characteristics by type of agency & worker
- Factors associated with perceived performance of agency
- Factors associated with perceived performance of worker
- Work content related to worker education & training
- Demographic & biographical characteristics as factors in worker achievement
- Job pressures & impact on perceived worker & organization performance
- Factors associated with worker perception of effective & ineffective agency
- Factors associated with worker perception of own competence & effectiveness
- Regional differences among workers & organizations
- Worker characteristics & attitudes by type of service, class of agency, and type of job
- Other special analyses & reports

Overview Study of the Dynamics of Worker Job Mobility

Overview Study of Employment of Paraprofessionals

Employment of Paraprofessionals, Patterns & Impact

Patterns of Organization & Impact on Workers

Working Papers

Program Application Reports

THIS IS APPLIED RESEARCH

The National Study of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Workers, Work, and Organizational Contexts is a program of applied research intended for use by agency managers and workers, as well as teachers and students. Central to the research strategy and publication plans is the overriding image of useful applied research as "pushing the state-of-the-art" in social science theory and research methodology to obtain dependable new knowledge for practical, viable, and effective solutions to day-by-day problems in practice, management, and policy making. The skill of the social scientist is challenged to provide new knowledge that the manager, the worker, or the student can use to understand better the phenomena he observes in everyday life. The ultimate test of the effectiveness of applied research is the degree to which it enables the manager or worker to recognize correlates in his own experiences, and to use information and knowledge from the research to better manage his own work in order to fulfill more of its purposes. The "usefulness" criterion has dominated research planning at all stages. Needless to say, no research is useful unless results are communicated and, furthermore, communicated in a form that is understandable by different potential users with different needs who bring different experiences and understanding to the interchange with the researcher. Therefore, a decision was made to publish a series focusing on different aspects of the research and performing different communication tasks in an effort to build a bridge between the research and the use of it by managers, workers, scholars, and students in a variety of settings.[*]

It is reasonable and proper for the SRS to be concerned about the state of knowledge about social welfare and rehabilitation workers because workers are the means—the vehicles—for the delivery of services. Workers embody the total technology of the field; they are both concepts in operation and instruments of action. This is in contrast, for example, with goods-producing industries, in which the workers design, fabricate, and operate the machines or other instruments which are the essential tools for doing the work. In goods industries the separate roles of worker and tool are relatively clear, whether the tool is as simple as a hoe, a needle, or a hammer, or is an enormous machine complex. In social welfare and rehabilitation, the worker as knowledge-in-operation and simultaneously as the tool that is manipulated to do the work requires us to change some of the images of work and workers developed in earlier analyses of goods-producing work. The worker as a human being serving as a technological unit in a service-producing system marches to a different drummer than the worker who is part of a man-machine technological unit.

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[*] If research reports, theoretical writings, and research utilization reports are useful to managers and workers in operating agencies, they should also be useful to students learning how to work in or manage such agencies, to teachers of such students, and to scholars involved in related study.

In service delivery systems the effectiveness of services is constrained by the effectiveness of workers. The effectiveness of workers is constrained by their ability to find purpose and meaning in the work they do and to see their careers as vehicles for self-realization. Effective and efficient delivery of services depends upon the effectiveness and efficiency of the individual agency's solution to its manpower problems: that is, the effective management of human resources to achieve an optimum integration of service goals and the work-related personal goals of individual workers. The circular interaction between workers, their work, and the work setting is clear. The central goal or purpose of this interaction is benefit to the recipient of services, and the ultimate determinant of effectiveness of services is the design and management of the service delivery system.

Many problems of resource management plague operating agencies, including problems in:

- obtaining adequate staff
- determining how many and what kinds of staff
- using them effectively, by
  - . . . specifying objectives and identifying work that must get done to achieve them
  - . . . clustering work tasks into jobs, work procedures, work groups and organizational subunits
  - . . . placing workers, assigning them to job and work units, providing supervision, letting them know what is expected, socialization into the work units, etc.
  - . . . making work assignments, including the definition of prescribed tasks and of both allowable and required discretion in work
  - . . . determining workload
- maintaining a match between skill requirements of work to be done and available worker skills
- maintaining morale: high motivation, responsibility, and creative use of discretion by all workers and managers are needed if the agency is to respond constructively and effectively to demands from its environment
- managing the sub-systems of the agency, interpreting agency program and objectives, and articulating subunit and individual purposes and needs
- managing change within the agency: that is, managing growth, change, and development of the organization, the work group, and the individual worker, including:
  - . . . managing the "training overhead" implicit in all program change and innovation in technological improvements and application of new knowledge

. . . articulating multiple and conflicting objectives (management by whose objectives?)
. . . facilitating worker growth in ability with concomitant growth in responsibility, status, and rewards
. . . keeping jobs and work flow design dovetailed with changes in objectives and changes in technological means and other resources

- developing agency procedures and practices, including work flow, work routines and processes, control and monitoring, information feedback, etc.
- managing interaction among human and other resources and operating constraints.

PREMISES UNDERLYING THE PROGRAM

The SRS decision to undertake a comprehensive research approach to develop new knowledge for use in solving manpower problems is based on five major premises:

1. The achievement of SRS objectives ultimately depends on effectiveness and efficiency in local and State agency use of staff to deliver services.
2. The study of workers as human components of service systems requires research and management concepts that are more useful than those which are the basis for traditional paper-work management, management of goods-producing systems, and systems analysis based on economic theory.
3. Limited financial and scientific skill resources for research argue the favorable cost/benefit status of a research attack which would develop knowledge and data that would help a number of agencies.
4. A national study is needed because many problems seem to occur frequently and in many different agencies.
5. We have little clear knowledge of the correlate and antecedent factors in manpower problems; that is, how and under what conditions specific problems tend to occur and how they are interrelated with different characteristics of the workers, the work settings, and the work itself.

The lack of knowledge has caused widespread distress. Managers and workers at all levels complain of the lack of data and knowledge about the nature and magnitude of crucial relationships. Social welfare and rehabilitation work, because of its nature, requires a large amount of discretion in work performance by workers at all levels. Workers are both concept and tool in operation, and success in services is most often success in interpersonal tasks.

Hence, work prescription, auxiliary tools, and procedures can never eliminate the discretion of the worker without eliminating the effectiveness of the services. This condition, combined with lack of knowledge and lack of data, results in a wide variety of complaints whose theme might be phrased "my technology is not under control." As a result, capacity for effective forward planning and efficient management of day-to-day work is seriously undermined. A sense of frustration is pervasive.

Helping local and State agencies is only one purpose behind this research. SRS and other national agencies (government and non-government) are concerned with many problems which can be solved only by considering interactions and interrelations between and among agencies; that is, they are concerned with problems which make it expedient to view the totality of social welfare and rehabilitation agencies as a system. These supra-agency problems are of concern not only to the national agencies but also to State and local organizations whose work includes overseeing or funding other agencies. Some of these problems are:

- allocation of resources between agencies, which requires knowledge not only of agency "outputs" but of the relationship between "use of resources" (in this case, manpower) and "outputs."
- interactions between agencies, in that the work of one profoundly affects what can, what must, and what may be done by another. Since workers are the vehicles for delivering services, the management of any one agency's human resources affects the functioning of the system as a whole.
- competition between agencies for the same human and financial resources. (This interaction makes it sensible and important to tackle such problems as the national adequacy of the social welfare and rehabilitation manpower pool.)
- interaction between service agencies and the educational institutions that educate and train manpower for social welfare and rehabilitation services. (Educational institutions have an interest in the totality of agencies as well as their interrelationships. SRS is concerned with helping educational institutions to be more effective–concerned directly because of its investment in education and training and indirectly because of interest in the adequacy of educational "output.")
- new knowledge potential of the whole network of agencies which can be viewed as a vast continuing experiment in which various apparently similar "inputs" and "processes" yield seemingly dissimilar "outputs," and different "inputs" and "processes" seem to have the same "outputs."
- the fact that SRS itself operates as an agency, and the agency problems outlined above occur here in an intensive form because

our solutions to these problems spread throughout the country like waves from a stone tossed into the water. However, because of the centricity and influence of the Federal agency, the waves often increase in size and impact as they meet and merge with State and local problems in search of a solution.

THE NATIONAL STUDY RESEARCH STRATEGY

In summary, a research strategy was developed because the need is too great, the hour is too late, and the cost of research is too high to depend on unrelated and fractionated solitary projects. What is required is an integrated, planned, coordinated research program based on a creative working partnership between social scientists and program and policy staff for a totality greater than the sum of the parts.

Minimal new knowledge needed to be useful for manpower problems requires data about: the workers themselves; the work tasks they perform; and the setting–organization and work group–in which they work.

These knowledge needs in the context of the present level of knowledge and state-of-the-art of research require the development of a multistage, multimethod, and multidiscipline research-development and knowledge-building strategy which takes into account:

- the dynamic nature of the phenomena under study;
- the need to consider all levels of the system separately and in combination, since they operate separately and in interaction with others;
- the necessity for multivariate and multidisciplinary methods to investigate the system meaningfully;
- the need to develop more precise and sensitive observational and analytic techniques so that we can better "see" critical aspects of the phenomena under study.

A strategy which builds knowledge requires a sequence of major research steps:

- a comprehensive overview of present social service knowledge, and integration with knowledge of, and issues in, practice and management of the social welfare and rehabilitation programs;
- refinement of research strategy and development of tactics for both extensive and intensive research;
- development of required data-collection, observation, and analysis methodologies;
- concurrent extensive and intensive investigations;
- integration of results of general-purpose and special-issue analysis;

- interpretation for use by managers, administrators, educators, and practice personnel;
- coordination with other research streams and planning for next major research programs;
- establishment of a formal mechanism for two-way communication about the technical issues and progress of the work, the perceived program information needs, and research utilization strategies.

PROJECTS IN THE NATIONAL STUDY

At some point a broad research problem must be broken down, sometimes more or less arbitrarily, into manageable units of work usually called "projects" or "studies." Faced with a complex set of knowledge needs, considerable pressure to obtain dependable results quickly, and a dissatisfaction with knowledge and ~~r~~esearch techniques that are now readily available, the project staff evolved a strategy which would sequence and parallel projects so that:

- overview and developmental research projects could distill present knowledge and yield early but less complete and less certain results for immediate use in service programs and as a basis for empirical investigation in further research;
- empirical investigation could proceed along two parallel lines to permit exploitation of both extensive and intensive research methodologies;
- the national survey would be based on a probability sample and survey data-collection methodology for wide-scale extensive investigation of a limited set of variables related to several different phenomena;
- an intensive investigation in depth of a larger number of factors and relationships would be related to specific issues and phenomena of particular concern, and would provide an additional depth of understanding of data generated by the national survey as well as exploring vital issues beyond what is feasible in the extensive study. This investigation would concern:
  ... factors in the employment of paraprofessionals, staff and organizational adaptation, and implications for service delivery
  ... impact of factors of organizational climate and structure on workers and work performance
  ... determinants of worker job mobility and implications for service delivery.

Each of the special area studies is designed in three phases.

1. Overview study: conceptual development and preliminary field investigation to provide a limited field demonstration of the

adequacy of the conceptual scheme from the above points of view and its ability to be operationalized so that the relevant variables may be measured in the national survey.

II. Technical assistance in incorporating results of the overview study in developing, pilot testing and planning the national survey.

III. Intensive field investigation to develop and refine the conceptual framework completed in the overview study; to give a more useful extension and elaboration of the conceptual framework; to extend the understanding of the national survey data; and permit more perceptive analysis of these data for further investigation of the specific topics and for application of insights from the findings to the practical problems of agency management and policy.

PUBLICATIONS FROM THE NATIONAL STUDY

Three types of publications are being presented under the series title *National Study of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Workers, Work, and Organizational Contexts.* Individual publications in each category will be numbered in order of appearance and can be expected as each unit of work is completed. The three types are:

Working Papers. These will be informal and interim-type publications, including state-of-knowledge and literature review papers, theoretical essays, and other informal conceptual and research methods papers, that are expected to have utility for workers and managers in social welfare and rehabilitation agencies, scholars working on similar research problems, and students preparing for work in this field.

Research Reports. These will be reports on specific units of research activity, including final reports on the phases of the developmental and overview studies, reports on specific problem areas, and other more or less formal report-type documents. The purpose here is to present a conceptual framework for research and an analysis of findings resulting from empirical investigation.

Program Application Reports. This set of publications is directed to policy makers, agency and program managers, and workers. The objective is to take research findings one step closer toward interpretation and translation for use than is feasible in the research reports themselves. This set is visualized as covering a fairly wide variety of topics at several levels of analysis, ranging from interpretation of findings for application in everyday practice, management, and policy making to reports by local or State agencies on actual program changes and/or demonstrations growing directly out of some of the research findings. A variety of authors is expected, primarily program staff (policy makers, managers, workers, teachers), with some collaboration between program and research staff. Papers of national interest prepared by staff in local, State, and nongovernmental programs will be published as resources permit. This class of publications is designed to begin building a bridge between research findings and their use in management and practice in operating agencies.

SUMMARY OF SPECIFIC PROJECTS

National Survey of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Counseling Workers, Work, and Organizational Contexts

This is a major research effort planned for initiation late in 1974. The survey is being developed in three stages to make it possible for the first time to link personal, social, demographic, education, work experience, work assignments, and attitudinal characteristics of workers with, on the one hand, some meaningful characteristics of the work tasks they perform and, on the other hand, characteristics of the organizational context and service or income delivery systems in which they work.

Present plans call for a research approach using a personal interview survey methodology and based on a national multistage probability sample of public and private organizations engaged in service delivery and policy and planning roles in social welfare and rehabilitation services.

The design for the national survey will be based on a sample of social welfare and rehabilitation establishments and, within establishments, a sample of workers. Present plans call for a sample of about 1,400 establishments, with an average of ten to twelve workers from each, stratified and sampled at differential rates: top executives (100% sample, that is, the top executive of each sample agency will be included in the worker sample); professional direct service workers (social welfare and rehabilitation counseling services); paraprofessional direct service workers; and all other workers engaged in managing, supervising, planning, designing, reviewing, consulting, etc. in social welfare and rehabilitation counseling services.

Two types of establishments will be sampled: primary establishments, whose primary function is social welfare or rehabilitation services (Major Group 83 in the STANDARD INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION MANUAL, 1972[*]); and secondary establishments such as schools and hospitals, which have other primary functions but have organizational sub-units that are engaged in social welfare or rehabilitation counseling services.

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[*] Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget; available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office.

The purpose is to relate characteristics of work to characteristics of workers and in turn to characteristics of the organizational context in which they work.

Data will be collected from three different sources: agency informants (one or more executives who will give information about the agency); agency statistics taken from agency records and reported by the agency informant; and respondents (top executive, professional, paraprofessional, office workers) who will give data about themselves in a personal interview with a skilled survey interviewer and by means of a questionnaire that they will fill out and return to the survey interviewer.

Three major foci of analyses are planned: the worker, the work, and the agency and work setting. Among analytic criteria to be used are: job satisfaction; agency mobility rates; worker mobility; worker and informant definitions and ratings of agency effectiveness; and worker definitions and ratings of work effectiveness.

Data on a variety of manpower dimensions will be collected, including:

Data about the worker

- . . . demographic variables and social roles, such as age; sex; ethnicity; health self-report; marital status and number of dependents; geographic mobility; present salary and family income.
- . . . life history
  - ☐ education and training, such as highest level; major field or specialization in college and graduate school; trade or vocational school; continuing education; in-service training.
  - ☐ work and career history, such as tenure in present job, with agency, in field; number of past employers; previous work in field; type of work performed in present job.
- . . . personal constructs
  - ☐ job values, such as ideal job; reasons left previous job; reasons took present job; reasons entering the field; what is liked and disliked about present job; upward mobility expectations.
  - ☐ orientation toward work
  - ☐ other personal constructs

Data about the job

- . . . identifying present and past jobs (is this the same or a different job?)

. . . job functions
- ☐ type of work performed
- ☐ percent of time on work functions
- ☐ hours worked per week; average, variations, predictability

. . . job rewards
- ☐ salary; fringe benefits; pay in kind
- ☐ advantages of present job and present job compared to ideal job
- ☐ personal rewards (also see data on worker job satisfaction)

Data about the agency, the work setting, and the work situation

. . . goals and mission
- ☐ nature and recent changes
- ☐ kinds of service
- ☐ community characteristics and service needs
- ☐ types of clients

. . . agency resources and allocation
- ☐ allocation by selected types of expenditure
- ☐ number of paid, full-time workers by type
- ☐ number and function of part-time, temporary, volunteer, and contract workers
- ☐ number of non-SWRS staff
- ☐ number of vacancies
- ☐ problems getting workers, training workers

. . . goal structure
- ☐ worker's perception of clarity of, consensus on, and relevance of agency's goals

. . . control structure
- ☐ span of control
- ☐ agency governance autonomy; nature of governing and advising bodies, including clients on governing boards and advisory committees
- ☐ influence on agency decisions by staff level
- ☐ tallness or flatness of structure (hierarchical levels)

. . . innovativeness and flexibility of agency
- ☐ age
- ☐ changes in goals and mission; changes to meet client/community needs
- ☐ ratio of paraprofessional workers to other staff
- ☐ worker's definition of an ideal agency and comparison of present agency to ideal

. . . reward structure

. . . professionalism of agency; emphasis on formal credentials

. . . formalization; extent of specification of policy and procedures

. . . routinization; degree work and events are regular and predictable

. . . worker's perception of work pressures and sources of motivation, including presence or absence of various incentives, conditions of job that motivate and demotivate, consequences of doing good work, desires regarding changes in work, what help needed in order to do better work

. . . supervision, including ratio of supervisors to staff, proportion of time spent in supervision, supervisor's work satisfaction, worker's satisfaction with supervisor and supervision

. . . agency climate as experienced by workers

. . . community, including community problems and needs, adequacy of services
- □ recent community changes
- □ inter-agency relationships
- □ selected community characteristics

Data on job satisfaction, both general and related to specific elements

Data on job mobility as a characteristic of the agency and of the worker

Data on worker's (including top executive) definition and ratings of worker effectiveness

. . . definition of the best and the worst worker

. . . rating of own performance on self-defined scale of best and worst worker

. . . worker's diagnosis of what would make him a better worker

. . . other indicators of worker impact and effectiveness

Data on worker's (including top executive) definitions and ratings of agency effectiveness

. . . worker's definition of best and worst agencies

. . . worker's rating of own agency on self-defined scale of best and worst agencies

. . . worker's diagnosis of what would make own agency better

. . . other indications of agency impact and effectiveness

A Study of Determinants of Worker Job Mobility and Implications for Service Delivery

The study and interpretation of worker job mobility has long been a concern of social scientists who have studied worker and organizational behavior and organizational effectiveness. The importance of this mobility stems from its implications for costs in recruiting, selecting, training, and placing workers; its impact on the quantity and quality of work performed and services rendered; its meaning for the workers themselves and their careers. This research is directed toward an exploration of the issues and effects of worker job mobility, and the identification and exploration of critical questions about: the ways in which worker job mobility can be characterized meaningfully from the viewpoint of work planning, organization management, education and training, and worker career management and planning; and the ways in which different attributes of the work situation and characteristics of the workers relate to different types of worker movement.

In order to deal meaningfully with worker job mobility (interjob, interagency, and to and from the field) it must be characterized as a dynamic phenomenon, with different implications for both the worker and the employing organization and in the context of different situations and circumstances. This characterization must spring from a conceptual framework that depicts different types of mobility within the context of the settings in which it takes place; the different types of movement between jobs; those workers who contribute differentially to the occurrence of different types of movement; the nature of the process in which entrance into or exit from specific job or agency employment is the end result; and the theoretical nature of worker job mobility as a characteristic of both workers and/or organizations and work settings.

A Study of the Impact of Factors of Organizational Climate and Structure on Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Workers and Work Performance

Generic sociological and organizational analysis indicates that there are complex relationships between the work to be done by and within an organization and the structure and climate of that organization. In order to produce knowledge which may be useful for effecting changes in the social welfare and rehabilitation field, concepts in organizational analysis must be specifically applied to this field. The relationships which exist within the field must be specifically identified and measured. This study is to identify sets of variables which are likely to yield meaningful interrelationships in the social welfare and rehabilitation field, so that the organizational contexts of social welfare and rehabilitation work and their impacts on workers and worker roles may be adequately characterized. The adequacy of this characterization will be in terms of the extent to which it provides knowledge which may be used for the further development or modification of jobs: design of work units and subsystems; education, training, and recruitment of workers; task structuring; and the organization of service delivery systems.

A Study of Employment of Paraprofessionals, Staff and Organizational Adaptation, and Implications for Service Delivery

This study is to perform the work of conceptual development and empirical investigation of the processes and effects of the trend toward the employment of a new type of service worker variously called "subprofessional," "nonprofessional," "paraprofessional," or "new-careerist." The conceptual development must eventually lead to a methodology for data collection through which the interrelationships and adjustment processes which arise within and among organizations, workers, work roles, and client services may be empirically determined.

The trend toward the employment of paraprofessionals, both indigenous and nonindigenous, in social welfare and rehabilitation work appears very likely to increase in scope. There are various sources of pressure and justifications for this trend. It has pervasive impact on the structure and climate of the employing organizations; on the roles, self-perceptions, and career patterns of both professionals and nonprofessionals; and on the relations between agencies and their clientele, between agencies and the community, and between agencies and extracommunity reference groups. The patterns of these impacts are not clear, although they seem likely to be different, depending on the kinds of pressures and justifications to which agencies respond, on the vicissitudes of continuing pressures and justifications, and on the developments stimulated by organization and worker responses to the inclusion of paraprofessionals.

The impetus for this study arises from a need for information which may be useful for anticipating the events consequent on the inclusion of paraprofessionals in social welfare and rehabilitation service organizations, so that discontinuities, conflicts, and abortive compromises which affect workers and/or the adequacy of services to clients may be minimized.

Some important questions are:

- Are there various types of paraprofessional workers? If so, how can these classes of workers be characterized conceptually to be meaningful for manpower and service delivery planning and management?

- What are the forces that impinge on social welfare and rehabilitation agencies to incorporate the various types of workers into their organizations, and how does this affect the pattern and results of differential manpower utilization?
- How can the various patterns or modes of using paraprofessionals be depicted or described in a meaningful manner?
- At a given point in time, do these depictions of worker functions vary systematically among the various components or levels of a given organization?
- Do these depictions of worker functions evolve or change over time? If so, what variables seem to be associated with these changes?
- How are different modes of paraprofessional assimilation and utilization reflected in selection and training procedures and in the amount of prescription associated with work functions?
- How can the consequence of the variables identified above be characterized?
- What are the dynamics of introduction of the paraprofessional into the agency? What are the processes of introduction? What is the impact on the division of labor?

A Study to Develop a Methodology to Measure Meaningful Dimensions of the Work Content of Social Welfare Jobs (Task Analysis Methodology)

Work on this project, both in house and under contract, is an effort to achieve a much-needed conceptual and methodological breakthrough.

Work has been pushed toward the measurement of the "transformation" attributes of a task. Each unit of work—that is, each task—can be meaningfully viewed as a bit of worker behavior that transforms a situation or condition into a new situation or condition consistent with the objectives of the stream of work in which it is embedded. Thus, its meaning can only be revealed by research methodology that links the work behavior and the results from the worker's action in a way that is relevant to work goals.

The conceptual base for this research is an image of the service organization as an ongoing "open" system, and of work units or tasks as units of activities which can be defined as separable entities which transform a situation into a new situation or result that is meaningful in terms of system goals. One basic assumption is that different worker actions can have the same end result and that different end results can be achieved by the same worker actions. The impact of the task on the goals of the system grows out of a configuration of the different task elements and cannot be explained in terms of simple causation.

Development of a Taxonomy of Agencies, Services, and System Maintenance Activities

A study to develop and test a categorization scheme and data collection procedures for identifying and classifying social welfare and rehabilitation services and system maintenance activities.

The objective is a present state-of-the-art conceptual framework and procedures for identifying and classifying all major units of work output of public and private social welfare and rehabilitation programs in primary agencies or as secondary programs in educational, health, and other types of establishments.

Taken together, the categories of services and the categories of system maintenance activities should include all major work units produced by the delivery system—i.e., should provide major categories of everything that gets done by the agency. Other sets of categories should make it possible to subsume and group smaller units of work such as tasks, task clusters, task sequences, and specific work procedures, in a manner that will relate the smaller units to agency goals and objectives. A taxonomy of services and system maintenance activities serves as the first or largest classification of "what has to get done" to meet agency objectives, and thus becomes a categorization of agency "outputs" and serves as a bridge between agency goals and objectives and specific work activities. On the other hand, it serves as the largest unit for accumulating related work activities, such as tasks, and as the organizing frame for the major classifications of work that gets done.

This project will focus on developing a hierarchical model structure which categorizes social welfare and rehabilitation activities on multiple dimensions, so that the different structures of agencies can be reflected in useful, unambiguous categorizations that have consistency and comparability from one situation to another. The end result will be a taxonomy of services and system maintenance activities and a typology of agencies as a tool for identifying the important interactions between and among different kinds of agencies and different types of workers and work. The typology of agencies will provide a similar bridge between the work of agencies and broader social goals.

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